

Punch





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The London Charivari

BELATEDLY, people are writing to the papers begging for that popular phrase "the wind of change" to be given a rest. On this page we made the appeal on April 6 last. These phrases die hard: for instance, over the findings of the corporal punishment Advisory Committee everyone is rushing to echo the view that reintroduced flogging would "put the clock back a hundred years." I suppose the only hope of rooting out this long-established cliché is to point out that if you do in fact go to the pains of putting a clock back a hundred years it still shows the same time as it did before you started.

That's Your Enemy

IN Saigon, as previously in the Congo, willing paratroops have been inhibited from wholehearted military action because nobody has told them which side they were on. This must be very frustrating to a keen unit. How irritating it must be to hold a loaded



gun at the ready outside a palace and then have to hover while you try to find out whether you are guarding or besieging the man inside. In modern revolutions there seems to be a need for tactical ABCA units.

Dry Cleaning

POOOR Rupert Brooke would have to delete a lot from the list of These I Have Loved if he were writing it to-day. The strong crust of friendly bread, many-tasting food, the deep panting train have all gone, or nearly.



Now, with the ultrasonic sound-wave dry shower promised by the Georgia Power Company within five years, out go the benison of hot water and sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring. Inaudible waves, they say, will wash you clean with no need for water, soap or towel. But will it be fun—or is that being unreasonable?

Pardon My Mask

SO smog masks are to be issued by the National Health Service. It should be a stimulating moment when two or three citizens thus equipped walk into their local bank. Which prompts me to ask: Is the Minister of Health quite sure that it is legal to wear a mask out of doors? It certainly was a crime in the days of highwaymen and this is just the sort of offence that legislators forget to strike from the Statute Book. Very civilly, Scotland Yard undertook to canvass a few of



"So I rang her and told her to convert all idle money into Fords and when I got home the drive was packed tight with Anglias, Zodiacs, Zephyrs and Consuls."

their oldest inhabitants, but none thought it an offence merely to walk about in a mask. Anyone who does so while carrying a crowbar and a bag labelled "Swag" is possibly asking for trouble. A genuine crook wishing to assume a total disguise need only dress as a motor-cyclist.

Unknown Warriors

THE London Rifle Brigade, one of the units affected by the Territorial Army re-muster, may never again run the risk of being addressed, as they were once at a Hyde Park review by the absentminded Duke of Cambridge, as "Gentlemen of the London Fire Brigade."

Takea Lotta Cheeka Day

THE other day when I fetched my milk in it was accompanied by a message, printed in imitation handwriting, telling me that "we" were having a sales competition and asking me if I would order an extra pint to help. (The mock-holograph printing was made a bit less convincing than it might have been by the fact that the milkman left two copies.) I must say this seems to me a most unwelcome development in salesmanship. It's possible I might be persuaded to buy something I didn't want if the salesman said it was good for me; but I'm damned if I will when he says it's good for him.

Ouch! My—!

NOW that the tougher supporters of a stern morality are beginning to counter-attack, sooner or later they will notice that the adulteress Lady Chatterley did not get her deserts. When they do, they will surely insist that future editions of the novel should contain an additional chapter describing her punishment. Perhaps, to retain the spirit of the book, there could be a poetic woodland scene in which different kinds of twig were gathered for the purpose.

Seen Any Plush Lately?

FLEET Street's addiction to the word "plushy" becomes a bit of a bore. It may be that the White Fish Authority and the Egg Marketing Board do inhabit plushy offices, as their critics allege; conceivably there are financiers who also drape their rooms with this old-fashioned material to lend a touch of Edwardian wickedness. But now we have authors turning out "plushily padded thrillers," companies making "plush pay-outs" (i.e. 1½ per cent more than expected) and "plushy times" in the swim-pool business. Plushy wines will be with us any moment. The one place where you won't find any plush, or pile of any kind, is a newspaper office (not on the editorial floor anyway); it is probably this deprivation which breeds such irrepressible plush-spotters.



"Report of the Advisory Council on Corporal Punishment."

Spoilsports

THE Cave Rescue Association is reported to be considering widening "Fat Man's Agony," a forty-foot-deep vertical shaft in Bar Pot, Yorkshire. At present the shaft is twelve inches wide. The Association would extend the width by six inches, in spite of the fact that dedicated pot-holers protest that if you resort to artificial means to facilitate the passage of underground stretcher parties pot-holing loses a lot of its fun.

Happy Christmas, Fido!

AN enterprising dog-shop in New York has issued a catalogue which bristles with ideas for Christmas presents. Why bore your dog with a dreary old basket when you can get him an antique four-poster in miniature for \$200? If he's blasé about tartan walking-out jackets and sailor-suits you can take him out to dinner in his own tailor-fitted tuxedo and black tie. Or you could give him a scarlet-lined opera cape if you are both music-lovers. For the sporting dog there is a ski-suit with matching boots, jockey-cap or hooded hunting suit. For the old there are more practical gifts: a hearing-aid (fitted by a qualified vet) or dumb-bells to help him get back into condition.

Coming Attraction

FOR the first time a nun has been called to the Irish Bar. What frightens me is the thought of the Hollywood film this may inspire. Sister Audrey Hepburn for the defence, with Father Bing Crosby as her junior, sounds altogether too possible.

Double Entente

A FRIEND in Boston, Mass., tells me that the latest in entertainment for the Americans is the twin-view drive-in movie which shows feature films two at a time. There are two screens, and you can take your pick of the sound tracks by switching into the appropriate one on your individual receiver. The only advantage I see in this, I'm bound to confess, is that it might be possible to sit back and enjoy *Carry On, Nurse*, while giving your neighbours the idea that you are critically absorbed in *The Battleship Potemkin*; but somehow I don't imagine the programmes are chosen helpfully enough for that.

— MR. PUNCH



DANGER—EVOLUTION IN PROGRESS

Barrister, but never at law, 14 musical shows. 1934 unsuccessfully prosecuted House of Commons for selling drink without licence. 1935 Joined House of Commons, 1950 Abolished. Claims modest part in winning sundry lost causes: reform of divorce, betting, licensing, libel and obscene publication laws: entertainment tax (abolished): betting tax (adopted), waterways (noticed). 10 years in uniform: two Good Conduct badges (Navy). 70 publications. 1944 re-named stars.

A.P.H.

Home Secretary



I SHALL begin with a little modest boasting about the importance of my high Office—a polite rebuke, perhaps, to *Whitaker's Almanack*. That peerless publication, in its list of "Her Majesty's Ministry," puts the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs next to the Prime Minister, followed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, the Lord High Chancellor, the Lord Privy Seal—then, and only then, the Secretary of State for the Home Department. This is quite wrong. *Dod's Parliamentary Companion* has it right: the Home Secretary comes after the Prime Minister, and before the Lord Chancellor, the Foreign Fellow, and all that riff-raff.

The Home Secretary stands next to the Throne. As *Whitaker* says: "He is the channel of communication between Her Majesty the Queen and her subjects." (Not so long ago he had to be present at the birth of a royal child. This practice, I believe, has been discontinued: I shall not renew it.) How improper, then, to give precedence to such upstarts as the Foreign Fellow and the Senior Tax-Collector!

Consider now his manifold duties: "The chief matters with which the Home Office is concerned are—The maintenance of law and order; the efficiency of the Police Service; the treatment of offenders, including juvenile offenders; the efficiency of the Probation Service; the organization of Magistrates' Courts; legislation on criminal justice; the supervision of the Fire Service; the preparations for Civil Defence Services; the care of children by local authorities and voluntary societies; the regulation of the employment of children and young persons; the control and naturalization of aliens; the law relating to Parliamentary and local government elections. In addition, many miscellaneous subjects are dealt with, including" (watch this comical collection) "explosives, dangerous drugs, poisons, intoxicating liquor and State Management Districts (England and Wales), shops, public safety, entertainment, bye-laws on good rule and government and other subjects, cremation and burials, betting and gambling; addresses and petitions to the Queen, ceremonials and formal business connected with honours."

What a list! Dynamite at every turn. It is not everyone who would itch for such employment: and I would add "legislation on all the prickly subjects from which most Governments shudder away as bathers do from a jellyfish." For that purpose, only a few years ago, I should have grabbed my portfolio with glee. But my predecessor, Mr. R. A. Butler, has stolen much of my ancient thunder. In my election address of 1935 I tartly wrote: "There has been no Home Secretary since the [first] War who seemed to see his appointment as the opportunity for creative reform." Mr. B. has seen it very vividly. He bubbles with constructive zeal: he really enjoys his alarming job. He has tackled—not, naturally, with unanimous cheers—such jellyfish as prostitution and—at long last—betting, etc. He lent a private but powerful hand to the Dirty Books Bill—now law. He has promised, and prepared, some reform of the "licensing" laws: he has even muttered cautiously about the Lord's Day Observance laws. Nor has he been guilty of a Royal Commission except the one on the Police now sitting. Full marks. (But he did refer corporal punishment to a committee of sort. Four faults? No—perhaps he was right.)

I have just read again clause eight of a Parliamentary Bill I drafted (in verse) twenty-five years ago. It was called the Spring (Arrangements) Bill. I rather like, by the way, but must not dwell upon, clause seven:

Termination of Official Report (*Hansard*)

(i) It is a pity, history teaches, to make reports of people's speeches, and afterwards to be unkind, simply because they've changed their mind. It is a most disgusting thing to make such comments in the Spring: so, as from when this Act is passed, that day's Report shall be the last.

But clause eight is really relevant; for it shows what the less reverent citizens thought of Home Secretaries in those days. They were Right Honourable Ogres, whose only purpose was the suppression of pleasure.

8. (i) The Secretary of State for Home Affairs shall now proceed to Rome, to Moscow, Washington, Cathay, or any place that's far away, and not return to English skies until the Speaker certifies that Spring has ceased to be a fact under the Moss (Collection) Act.

(ii) Meanwhile, o'er all his grim domain a lovely golden girl shall reign: and this delicious creature shall give cosmic parties in the Mall (*paying the bills, if she is dunned, from the Consolidated Fund*). The Civil Service, hand in hand, shall dance in masses down the Strand; and all the Cabinet shall wear wild honeysuckle in the hair.

(iii) It shall be deemed that everyone has come into the world for fun. This shall be printed on the wall of every office in Whitehall.

I may not go as far as that. But all my heads of departments will have to wear carnations, and at lunch-time a band will play in the Home Office hall.

Mr. Butler, already, has changed the "image" of his "grim domain." Where we used to expect nothing but repression we now look, with some confidence, for release. The opportunities for manufacturing "fun" are not many; but he does seem to think that here and there the area of happiness—you don't like that? All right—enjoyment, indulgence—may safely be enlarged. And, as Tennyson said, "some work of noble note may yet be done." For example:

The Lord's Day Laws—There is a case for it, perhaps, but I shall *not* appoint a Royal Commission. That would give the fanatical few a platform far more spacious than they

deserve: and I shall not do anything drastic enough to madden many others. For example, I shall distinguish between Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. Most of the work will be the simple repeal of ancient laws which are not respected or regarded by anyone, even the fanatical few. For the rest I shall consult the Archbishops—and the actors—and the athletes, etc. There is no logical reason why the cinemas can open but *not* the theatres—the cinemas, I imagine, throughout the land, employ far more people. But if the theatre-folk are against Sunday opening (with Monday off) I shall probably drop the idea. If it is not possible to be sure what they think we might have an experimental period of, say, one year. I drafted a Bill on these lines long ago. Certainly I shall try to get rid of that prize piece of humbug, the compulsory contribution to "charity" from the Sunday cinema.

"Licensing"—no—Food and Drink—There is no room here for reforms in detail; and my predecessor, I fancy, will have done this job pretty well. The big thing is to sweep away the mean thought and insulting language which have governed us for fifty years at least. The Royal



"This would have cost us a couple of bob last August."



"They said it couldn't be done."

Commission of 1929 wanted a "progressive, comprehensive, reduction of 'licensed premises' at which 'alcohol' is 'consumed.'" Never a word of praise was said for the pub as a social institution, the like of which no other country has got. But for unfair taxes and too much interference it would be better everywhere than it is. Then the good words "wine" and "beer" were never mentioned. It is always "intoxicating liquor." One might as well say that any man who sits down to his sausage and mashed is a glutton and the café-man should be "licensed to sell obesity-producing carbohydrates." Many doctors, indeed, will tell you that more people are damaged by over-eating than by "drink." Among other things, as Top Secretary of State, I should pay a call on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ask him, for the sake of two fine institutions, the (genuine) club and the pub, to reduce the taxes on wine, beer and spirits. (I should also ask him, by the way, about cigars. The cigar is almost the only thing that has never been accused of causing cancer. Why, then, tax it out of the range of ordinary men?)

Change the thought and the language and the practical details will follow: though I do not pretend that it will be an easy job. No hard-worked publican, for example, will thank you for giving his customers full "freedom." He likes the "afternoon break"—no wonder; and very few of his customers seriously resent it. But in the fixing of his "hours" he would like to have the same sort of autonomy as the club, to fit his arrangements to his locality and customers. It is absurd, for example, that on Boat Race Day he cannot alter his hours to suit the Boat Race crowd without making formal applications for permission, which he is most unlikely to get. We might perhaps give him six *bisques* a year—six special

occasions when he could alter his "hours" without official permission. The police, of course, will fuss: "Pubs open at different times! What next? All must be uniform." To which my answer will be: "Dear police, unless there is public drunkenness all this has nothing to do with you. The pubs are intended for the convenience of the public, not the police."

By the way, having talked to the Chancellor, I shall have a word with the hotels about the price of wines. I hate to say an unkind word, but it does seem to me that they are over-doing it too.

Shops—I shall promote some small alterations in the Shop Hours laws. I should like, for example, to see book-shops open in the evening, as they are in New York. Why not?

One word, two words, are surprisingly absent from a list of Home Secretary subjects which includes "intoxicating liquor, betting and gambling, cremation and burial." They are:

Marriage and Divorce—Whether he has any pet views of his own or not, I feel that these are matters the Home Secretary should keep an eye on. That is, he should not forget all about them till some private Member draws a horse in the Ballot and comes up for Second Reading with a Bill. If, like Mr. Butler, I am Leader of the House as well, I shall at least arrange for the Report of the last Royal Commission to be debated. It was inconclusive on the main theme—the problem of the long-separated—but it was produced by five years' hard labour and deserves to be discussed. Besides, M.P.s are entitled to make up their own minds in these affairs.

Being so close to Her Majesty, who is Head of the Established Church, I shall from time to time call her attention to the behaviour of Convocation and the Bishops—for example, the treatment of innocent Christians and Protestants who marry persons, innocent too, who have "been through" the Divorce Court. To excommunicate such persons, if only for a period, cannot be justified by the rubric and is therefore quite illegal.

I shall also introduce a Bill to amend and clarify the "Conscience of the Clergy" clause in the Act of 1937. Parliament intended that the parson should have complete liberty of conscience in such affairs—to marry or not, as he thought fit. The Bishops, ordered by Convocation, have taken this freedom away. This Bill is ready drafted—but in prose.

If there is any hot resentment at this talk of "law" I shall murmur gently "Very well. If you would prefer to be disestablished—?"

Elections—I shall present a Bill to abolish the absurd, unfair, undemocratic, and ineffective "deposit" arrangement—the £150—at Parliamentary elections. I shall be told: "You can't do that without a Speaker's Conference." I shall answer "Nonsense. No Speaker's Conference agreed to the abolition of the University seats. The last one agreed that they should be preserved. By the way, I intend to restore them."

Summer Time—Another Bill will bring to an end the present system of Summer Time—that is, no clocks will be altered, but the guts of the thing will remain. The Government will say: "From March to October all Government offices, etc., will start work an hour earlier: we hope that everyone else will follow suit." Licensing hours, etc., will be

put back one hour by Order in Council. The railways will be told to have Summer Time tables ready. Thus Big Ben will be compelled to lie no more and we shall remain faithful to Greenwich Time, as we, of all people, should.

If this is not well received I shall present another Bill which will order the citizen to advance his barometer—by half an inch—on the first day of Summer Time. Just another little deception, and very fitting for an English spring.

I have left small space for the really difficult things like:

Law and Order—Criminal Justice, etc.—I know the arguments against—and I know I shall madden some of the local boys. But I *think* I shall try to bring all the police under my wing. It is absurd that the conduct of the police can only be discussed in Parliament if my dear Metropolitans are concerned. Thus, too, I shall be better able to pet the police as I should like, and get them lots of pay.

I shall have a go (God help me!) at the capital punishment law. The present distinctions won't do. Capital punishment the people, I am sure, would reluctantly prefer to keep—but not necessarily hanging by the neck. Many would accept the one who are revolted by the other. We do not mind destroying a mad dog, but we choose the best possible way. I shall seek a better way.

As I said nearly two years ago to the Electors of East Harrow: "I am as uneasy as many of you about savage crimes and soft corrections."

Whatever the wise kind committees say, I shall bring back the humbling birch, not the cat, for certain folk and offences—especially for burglary, one of the beastliest crimes, whether "violent" or not. And it might do more good to the drunk or reckless driver than a fine.

I see that **Public Safety** is one of my "subjects." I shall therefore make it my business to stand up for "the locals" in their battles with Speed and the Ministry of Transport. Here in London, the L.C.C. area, the Minister raises the speed limit from thirty to forty, against the wishes of the local Council, against the emphatic opinion of the inhabitants. Forty becomes the minimum speed, fifty or sixty the average. There are not enough police to check the speeders and now, they say, they have not got vehicles fast enough to catch some of them. Yet in spite of petitions, from inhabitants and councillors, we can get no traffic-lights, no pedestrian crossings. Local opinion goes for nothing, and speed, not safety, is the king. In future the Minister will have to reckon with me.

I don't think I shall be Home Secretary for very long, Mr. Editor. But you asked for it.

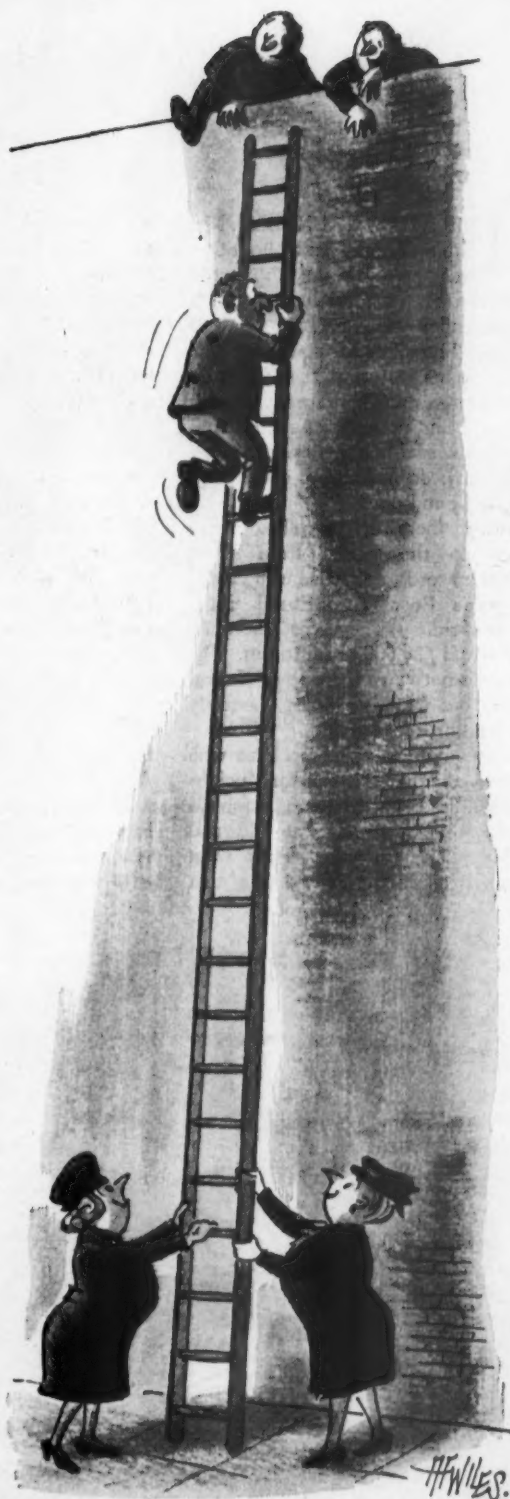
Other portfolios will be offered to:

- (8) **ARNOLD WESKER**, Minister of Housing
- (9) **GWYN THOMAS**, Chancellor of the Exchequer
- (10) **NIGEL KNEALE**, Minister of Power

☆

Over to You—Over

"SIR,—Traffic over the Channel bridge from England to France should proceed on the right, so as to prepare the drivers for the conditions they will meet when they arrive in France. Conversely, traffic from France to England should proceed on the left."—*Letter to The Times*



"No doubt about it, these people from the Prisoners' Aid Society certainly do a wonderful job."

You, Too, Can Have a Radio Station

By E. S. TURNER

MISS JOYCE GRENFELL, Mr. Billy Wright and the other members of the Pilkington Committee on Broadcasting are going to hear much eloquent advocacy of local sound broadcasting stations. The B.B.C. wants to run them, as do business interests. There are suggestions that towns and universities should lend a hand, but such suggestions, unless I am in error, do not always come from town clerks and dons.

Already there are excellent radio stations on the market from about £15,000 upwards, as anyone who visited this year's Royal Agricultural Show will confirm. They cost between £20,000 and £30,000 a year to run. The question is not "Are there any technical snags?" but "Do we really, honestly want local broadcasting?"

To any middle-aged Americans who may be watching, this call for "neighbourhood" radio, with a strong emphasis on education, will have an old and possibly fish-like smell. They went through it all in the early 1920s, that

blissful period when radio was hailed as the universal educator, and no one had guessed that its primary function was to keep consumer goods moving. What happened?

In that happy dawn, America's universities and colleges, seminaries and polytechnics and Bible institutes all joined in the fight for frequencies. So did private individuals, with many-splendoured missions to humanity. One of the early visionaries was the "goat-gland doctor" of Kansas who set up Station KFKB in order to persuade men of distinction to undergo a rejuvenating operation at 750 dollars a time. After some years the Federal authorities drove this bediamonded *entrepreneur* with his fifty secretaries over the border into Mexico, where he set up a new station and continued to broadcast his message of hope to America. The Pilkington Committee might care to make a note of this: no broadcasting licences to be issued to visionaries, without strict inquiries.

It was inevitable, perhaps, that the

odd eccentric, rum-runner or political firebrand should latch on to a useful wave-length (after all, we have a little bother with Scots separatists even today); but most of the early broadcasters had honest pretensions, if inadequate resources. The educational pioneers included, besides the higher seats of learning, two automobile schools, the Glad Tidings Temple, Inc., of San Francisco, a school of chiropractic and the Culver Military College, Indiana. The only definitely educational programme broadcast by the last-mentioned was "a map-reading problem conducted over a period of several weeks for the benefit of reserve officers." It had no influence on enrolment and the station went off the air. Sandhurst, please note.

The rate of mortality among educational stations was high. Among the principal reasons logged was "no interest shown by local faculty." Many occupants of chairs regarded broadcasting as conduct unbecoming to an academician and a gentleman. The ether was a vehicle for exhibitionists. Others did not mind dusting off an old lecture script for the new toy, but the idea of providing unpaid material at fixed times, day in and day out, and of answering fan mail from farmers was not to be borne. Equally intolerable was the discovery that one's talk might be sandwiched between a broadcast by the college dance orchestra and a discussion of campus sex problems, or even followed by an outright commercial.

There is probably no more disenchanting task than trying to run a radio station without funds, without staff, without encouragement and without hope. One by one the cultural transmitters went silent, having either failed to use their allotted time or filibustered through it by reading the Washington equivalent of White Papers, or playing all the records in the local store. It turned out that a number of citizens had never really wanted to listen to commentaries on college basketball semi-finals after all, and



"Still no ideas yet, dear?"



"Excuse us, but our door's stuck."

some were cross when they found that commercial jazz broadcasts were being fouled by talks on Christian ethics.

But a handful of educational stations never gave up the fight. In the annals of behind-the-lines warfare, the story of these "long-haired" guerrillas, driven from clearing to clearing of the frequency jungle, never knowing how many supporters they had, never knowing when their supplies would be cut off, never doubting they were doing the job radio was made for, is an unsung epic.

One station which thrived in adversity was founded, not by a university, but by the City of New York. Station WNYC began in 1924 as an offshoot of the police and fire departments but launched out into cultural broadcasting. Mayor LaGuardia dismissed it as a "peanut whistle" and tried to cut off its steam, but was circumvented. The station,

which has been called "the conscience of United States broadcasting," has a reputed half-million "upper crust" listeners. Could Herbert Morrison's L.C.C. have mounted an operation like this—and run a book festival with one hundred separate programmes? Could County Hall do it now?

The American trade unions at one time operated more than a score of stations. It was the hope of the United Auto Workers, in particular, that they might be able to inform, entertain and strengthen their membership by way of the ether, but the splendid vision died and the bills were colossal. Whether Mr. Frank Cousins's admirers would be prepared to give him a radio station may be doubted; there would be little point since he enjoys almost unrestricted use of the national transmitters. If the Dagenham or Coventry

motor workers were rash enough to ask for a broadcasting licence, would the Postmaster-General give them one?

In America to-day there flourishes a National Association of Educational Broadcasters with some fifty-one stations, some of them also mounting television programmes. They are mostly owned by universities, school boards and religious bodies. An Association spokesman said, only the other day, that "people are almost miraculously untouched by education." There are more than a hundred other educational stations, differing in standards to the extent that they accept commercials. One of them, in New Orleans, is run by Loyola University; another, in Wisconsin, by the Norbertine Fathers, a notable example of broadmindedness by a twelfth century Order.

What are the lessons for us? Could our senior universities be trusted to co-operate in local broadcasting—Gown calling Town, as it were? To put it crudely, are dons prepared to do for nothing, in their colleges, what they are paid to do on the Brains Trust? How do the proctors feel about giving young men microphones? Is Sir John Wolfenden's university willing, as was Oglethorpe University in Georgia, to offer scholarships to students who promise well as announcers? At a lower educational level is there a risk of council school teachers becoming microphone show-offs? At least they can't boast about their audience ratings because there won't be any audience ratings.

There are many more questions. Are housewives likely to forgo the Light Programme in order to listen to local shopping news (Shortie Nightie Week

at the Co-Op), or the Secondary Modern choir, or a debate on disarmament by the Girls' High School, or readings from the council minutes? Are motorists really going to tune in to local traffic news, which is one of the recommended services? Will local preachers be anxious to have their services broadcast when their pews are half-empty already? How big an audience will there be in the evenings for Mr. Spade, the archaeologist?

No doubt we have minorities which are neglected by radio. If commercial stations in America can run Negro programmes, is there a case for setting up a local transmitter with that object in Notting Hill? If WJLB, a commercial station in Detroit, can broadcast every week in Polish, German, Italian, Greek, Rumanian, Croatian, Maltese, Armenian, Hungarian, Jewish, Lithuanian, Spanish, Syrian, and Ukrainian, may

we expect similar enterprise from Radio Hampstead?

The firm of Pye Telecommunications say there is room in Britain for one hundred local stations. With commendable honesty they warn: "It would clearly be fatal to require a local organization to set up a station if the responsibility incurred was not to its taste." It's a task for enthusiasts, they say; and how right they are. They recommend that the expenses of local stations should be provided by local advertising.

Obviously we can't settle this problem by asking questions. We must have an experimental station or two, once the governmental green light is given. What about it—Oxford? Welwyn Garden City? Harlow New Town? Aberystwyth? No offers? All right then, we'll ask Criccieth and Cleckheaton. They'll show you up.

Over the Bridge with Rosie

Written after reading the Laurie Lee and other autobiographies

By H. F. ELLIS

I WAS alone at the edge of a field of corn that ran away from me down the hill like a flood of molten butter. Raindrops glittered on the whitethroat-happy hedge in shifting opalescent arabesques and the leaves were a filigree of chrysoprased against the washed Aegean-blue of the over-arching sky. A spider, huge to my three-year-old eye as a tarantula, spreadeagled its tireless, tortuous way through the knee-high dust-jewelled grasses, and for a timeless eternity I watched it, chin cupped in small tight fists, marvelling at the bright green legs, the brown abdomen edged with white, the infinitely delicate extrusion and retraction of the palpi as the insect laboured Sisyphus-like towards some unimaginable

goal.* Love flooded my tiny being, a formless all-embracing love for the miracle of created things, for life itself, for the sun, moon and stars, for my own round, golden-glinting forearms. I was gripped, engulfed, overwhelmed by a passion of love until the pain of it was a quinsy in my throat, and clutching a small umbelliferous flower, whose name I forget, I fell forward on my face in a storm of weeping.

It was my mother who picked me up and cradled my tear-wet body in her great mottled arms that smelled

*Spiders are not, of course, true insects. But I must recall events as they registered on my consciousness at the time, if the bloom of childhood is not to be lost. It was some months before I learned that the head and thorax are not segmented in the Arachnids.

comfortingly, if I remember rightly, of rhubarb leaves and boracic powder. Gropingly, with my head buried in the blue-and-white print blouse from Mr. Stephens' shop over the hill, I tried to tell her something of the ecstasy of this my earliest revelation of the integrated harmonious beauty of the natural world. But, close as we were, even her compassionate understanding could not follow me to the dizzying peaks of comprehension that I sought to scale.

"Whitethroat-happy hedge!" she repeated wonderingly, stroking my curls with the strong fingers that could pull a fowl to pieces in less than eight minutes by the marble clock above the kitchen hearth. "Landsakes, what ails the child?" Then, as was always her



way when puzzled or put out, she began to hum the opening bars of *La Traviata* and swinging me over her shoulder carried me home to tea. Already, though scarcely conscious of it at the time, I was reaching out towards a *Weltanschauung* beyond her ken.

That night, while the liquid moon flooded through the bars of my cot, striating the saffron blankets with turquoise and, to my childish fancy, peopling my bed with the slashed doublets of Spanish grandees, I heard my mother's gentle voice, half laughing, half concerned, pondering my self-confessed love for my own forearms, and I had to bite the sheets till the milk teeth came through my gums to prevent myself from crying out at what I thought a betrayal of my secret heart. "Chrysoprase, too!" my mother said over and over again. "I don't know where he gets it." Then came my father's deep-throated reply, level and soothing as the hum of a distant threshing-machine, the stress only slightly heavier on adverb and predicate. His actual words I could not catch, but with a child's sure instinct I knew that there was affectionate amusement in the glance he gave my mother, and that the nails on the hand that slowly swung his horn-rimmed spectacles now this way, now that, were trimmed very short and kept surprisingly clean for a signalman on the Great Western Railway. "Opalescent arabesques!" my mother murmured. "Did you ever!"

The moon minced behind a cloud, and soon I slid down an endless golden slope into the drained sleep of babyhood.

I was five when my mother poured a bucket of whitewash over the vicar, an incident that remains in my mind because it was then that I realized for the first time what wonderful copy she would make in years to come. Born of humble stock, self-taught, superstitious (she practised witchcraft in a desultory way until the day of her death), mean about candles, forgetful, given to



"I've got a crashing headache—I've been at the hairdresser's all the afternoon."

freakish clothes and incalculable outbursts of boisterous high spirits, she was the ideal subject for a comedy of eccentric family life, while an innate sweetness of temperament and an acute though inarticulate sensitivity to beauty rendered her not altogether out of place in the passages of pure poetic vision I hoped to interpolate.

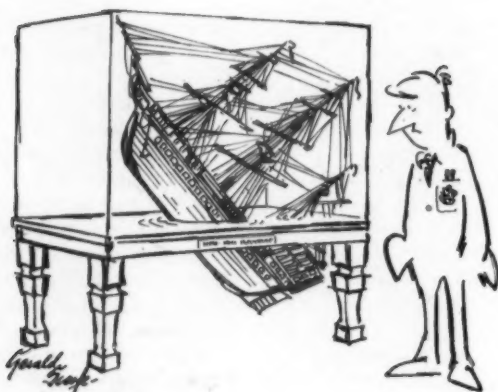
And yet—I was not entirely happy. For days on end I lay in my narrow bed beneath the gnarled roof-beams, racked with fever and shaken by the fits of nausea and vomiting that bedevilled my boyhood and led to the extraordinary hallucinations that will be found described with such astonishing faithfulness in Chapter IV. Or, feeling a little better after my mother's physicking with fennel roots and berberis gathered under a waning moon, I would creep downstairs, to crouch unnoticed under the washhouse sink while my eleven sisters slapped, rinsed and scoured,

soused, ducked, splashed, dabbled and wrung, plunging their white arms in the froth-rich, bubble-eructating bowls until the stone-flagged floor gleamed with iridescence in the April sunlight and all the world was a tumescent rainbow, foam-flecked, mazy, an airy whirlpool of kaleidoscoping colours, emerald and sapphire, garnet, topaz and chalcedony, a nacreous effulgence so celestial in its splendour that my childish vocabulary could no longer cope with it and I shrank back sobbing into my dank cavern, convinced that I should never recapture in print the pristine wonder of the scene.

Then my mother would come in crying "Hurry, girls! Your Uncle Bernard's come!" and perhaps, in her lovely harum-scarum way, dump down a bag of soot on the freshly-laundered petticoats. There was always laughter in our house while my mother was alive.

My Uncle Bernard often drove over to





visit us in his red-and-yellow brougham, his great beard maculate with snow in winter or spattered with foam from the horses when the sun beat down mercilessly on the drowsed valley. He was a giant of a man, able to squeeze the juice from a carrot one-handed when the fancy took him, and few of the village girls, so it was rumoured, could resist his advances. "Advances?" my father said once, when we children had been sent to bed and I had concealed myself, unknown to him, behind the faded settee on which many years later Ralph Turnbull was to try to take his life with one of his own milk bottles. "I should call them charges!" Mystified, for there was still much that my slowly awakening mind was unable to comprehend, I nevertheless wrote the words down, liking the ring of them, in the penny exercise book that accompanied me wherever I crawled or trotted.

Uncle Bernard! I secretly feared this huge rum-ridden ex-schoolmaster, who would toss me playfully into the air so high that I was sometimes sick three times before he caught me a bare inch above the wormcast-lovely lawn and finally let me go with a friendly clap on the shoulder that sent me spinning into a clump of nettles by the gate, whose pungent aroma is still with me as I write. For my mother, whom I think he adored, he showed scant courtesy, damning her eyes to hell and turning our well-ordered suppers into an orgy of oaths and spluttered gravy. But I owe him much, for he was a real character and his lechery and fearless horseplay were to fill many a chapter that would otherwise have been

lacking in masculine interest. It was a sad day when he was found drowned in a horse-pond with seventy feet of garden hose wound round his body; but within a week, by one of those lucky chances that every potential autobiographer prays for, my father took up Rosicrucianism and at last began to pull his weight from a selling point of view.

So the long summer days slid by, autumn merged into winter and winter into spring. Mother locked three commercial travellers in the vestry, the trees on Cuckholm Ridge marched sombrely against a sky shot with heliotrope and viridian, and my youngest sister fell out of an apple tree on the day old "Dot-and-carry" Benskin went off his head and set fire to the wrong war memorial. Scandal, sudden and terrible, shook the Manor House to its foundations, cherry blossom of a wealth and splendour that the oldest could not parallel pattered lightly down on the twined bodies of young lovers in Shapley Dell, water-boatmen flimsy as thistledown oared their nebulous way across the oleaginous surface of the village pond, father got mumps and mother hummed the Jewel Song from *Faust*. And through it all I held on my lonely path, noting and remembering, tormented by nervous headaches, ravished by the intoxication of a sister's summer dress against a background of young birch trees, filled with tremulous intuitions by the wallpaper in the downstairs lavatory, searching, experimenting, hurled into the air by Uncle Bernard, growing and ripening like a greengage as the multitudinous impressions flickered and played over

my infant consciousness like summer lightning over a faintly heaving Adriatic sea. I little dreamed that my sixth birthday was to throw me into the savage maelstrom of school and bring me face to face, in the person of Miss Lettice Harbutt, with some of the finest material any writer could hope to meet.

It was not the Headmistress, however, who, on that bright September morning, furry with the hum of bees and pregnant with the tweedy smell of new school clothes, when I clambered with my five brothers into the new-fangled motor bus outside the sweetshop from which old Miss Pritchard had so often chased me in half-pretended anger with cries of "Be off, ye skinny little runt!" and then, relenting, pressed humbugs or sticky suspender-coloured butterscotch into my eager—Where the hell have I got to? Oh, yes. Sex had troubled me scarcely at all in the seemingly endless years of babyhood from which I was only now emerging. I knew of course (for the village was frank about such matters, and my three eldest sisters often chattered and giggled together under the window of the apple-loft where I dreamed the hours away) that men and girls went sometimes hand in hand to the grass-heavy water meadows, or, in winter when the moonlight fell icicle-sharp on the bare branches, to barn and haystack; but I was wrapped in my personal fantasies and let them go, unrecorded. So, as I fitted my bare knees beneath the cramping desk and turned to survey the long rows of my classmates, I met the warm brown glance of Rosie Millwater with a smile of innocent friendliness. Her small dark face was alive with curiosity, intent with an intimate searching quality that nothing in my earlier experience could match. As she unlocked her eyes from mine with a laughing aside to her fair-haired neighbour (afterwards Dame Prudence Wood and a 'cellist of international repute) I felt my interest quicken and stole a long, slow look at this strange, disturbing creature. She was mature for her age, as I judged, and already, beneath her thin cotton blouse . . .

But no. I'm sorry. Even now, in my middle fifties, touches of the old childhood nausea come upon me at times and I can write no more. Besides, one must leave something for the inevitable sequel.

Cricket Like Crazy

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

YOUR game, I believe, is cricket?
It was. Oh, all right, it is. Just.
And it's dying. I've just been
reading...

On the contrary it's never been more popular. Village clubs are booming, the suburban clubs run three teams apiece, the northern leagues attract bumper gates.

Leagues? Really? But I'm speaking of real cricket.

So was I.

No, I mean the big stuff, county cricket. Isn't that dying?

It's been dead for years. People still read about it of course—just as they read murder trials, Godfrey Winn and Charles Curran—but they don't go to watch it any more. It's good copy for the newspapers and good raw material for the statisticians, and that's all there is to it. Dead.

Then why does it still go on, day after day, six days a week, right through the summer?

Because cricket's administrators are in blinkers. They have eighteenth century minds—no, that's too generous: fourteenth century minds. They don't seem to care that the great game is going to pot, subsidized shamefully by

football pools and sweepstakes and eternal appeals. They played county cricket at the university when they should have been doing a spot of work, and they can't or won't admit that the university authorities were crazy to let them get away with it.

With what?

With cricket played six days a week from eleven-thirty to six, cricket played to the point of suicidal boredom. Long ago, long before W.G., railways and social revolution, three-day cricket was reasonable. When Lord Whatsit of Yorkshire got together a team to play Lord Whosit's XI of Sussex at Hove he knew that the operation could only be justified if the match was made to last several days. The journey itself was an ordeal. Then there was the weather to be considered. To make the southern thrust worth-while the game had to become a penetration in depth, a lengthy sojourn. Two innings at least—in case the skipper failed with his first knock, in case one team was bundled out too quickly, in case the whole arduous trip became a fiasco. So three days it was (long enough to justify the expense and discomfort of the travel, long enough to enable the team to gain strength for the return journey), three days and two or more innings. And even so there were not enough amateurs to face the ordeal. Professionalism, the arts of defensive batting and defensive bowling, and time-wasting and soul-destroying apathy.

And to-day?

The game goes on as it did in the eighteenth century, except that there are now very few spectators. Nobody who earns a living can hope to see a game through from start to finish: spectators are expected to drop in for an hour or so to marvel at the routine, workaday proficiency of time-serving professionals whose play is geared to averages, benefits and end-of-season contracts. At its best cricket-watching is like popping into the theatre for five minutes at a time or listening to a few hours of a Vivaldi concert.

You would like to see county cricket abolished, then?

In its present form—Yes. But is

there any reason at all why the game shouldn't be played to a finish in five hours as it is in the leagues? Single-innings matches. Two-thirty to seven-thirty. And played not among the counties—too amorphous to command real allegiance—but by the towns and cities. Leeds *versus* London North End. Manchester *versus* London South End. Cardiff *v.* Stoke. Brighton *v.* Nottingham. The grounds would be packed. The teams would consist mostly of amateurs. There would be no ridiculous Minor Counties (the cheek of it, calling Staffordshire a *minor* county!) and—

What about Tests?

Ah, that's my major point. All Test Match countries except England already draw their players from this league-type cricket. In Australia, South Africa, West Indies, India, Pakistan and New Zealand they're far too sensible to devote more than their week-ends to the game. Odd State or Provincial games, yes. Lengthy Tests occasionally, yes. But the game everywhere but in England is a delightful week-end recreation—never an endless chore.

What about throwing and dragging?

Some other time, some other time. Let's change the subject and wait for decisions from headquarters.

No follow-on?

No, I've said enough. Too much.

Are you being serious, then?

Deadly.



"It's a Government plan to buy up surplus cars, put them in the car-parks and fill them all in."

Punch Civil Disobedience Campaign

Announcing a series of Incitements to Civil Disturbance, Riot, Newspaper Correspondence, etc.

No. 8

THE MOTOR MESS To-night, 7.30, Grosvenor Square. Volunteers wanted to tow away U.S. Embassy cars, support plan to raid Road Fund and buy Detroit for Britain.

KEEP FORD BRITISH!

Leave Him, Lady, Where He Lies

By PATRICK RYAN

AT a recent congress on the Problems of Drink a learned American doctor denounced the practice of feeding black coffee to somnolent drunks. This time-honoured nostrum doesn't sober them up, he proclaimed, it merely wakes them up; if you pour black coffee into a sleepy drunk you just finish up with a wide-awake drunk and double the original trouble on your hands.

As a problem of drink myself I was naturally interested in this contention and was also gratified to find such high-level support for the conclusions about black coffee which I had formed after personal research in Falmouth some years before.

I can't remember exactly what I was doing in Falmouth. I was either

following a man for M.I.5 or after that job making lucky plastic Cornish pixies. Anyway duty took me into a small tavern down by the docks. The bar-room was snug as a cabin, all polished lino, varnished woodwork, scrubbed-white deal, and just wide enough to house a darts pitch, a table and a built-in bench. Three sailors were in occupation, each pinted and well on the way. The largest one, an introspective toper deep in the happy sadness of alcohol, was sitting in the corner and quietly singing "God Save The Queen." Swaying gently before the white line on the rubber mat a leading-seaman threw darts meticulously off the board. The last of the trio, big as Charlie Drake and broad as Freddie Mills, sat near the door, his

face deep in his beer-mug. As I bought myself a glass he came up for air.

"Hi-ya, Wee Willie Winkle," he said. "There's room for you here."

I was six feet seven at the time and hungrily built. Taking off my bowler and putting it on the table I sat down beside him.

"Thank you," I said. "Good evening."

"Tancy Gorbali." He tapped his chest solemnly. "That's me. I fecht 'em all. Featherweights, lightweights, champeens, Chinamen and big black Yankees. Let 'em all come. I fecht 'em all."

"Did you really?" I said.

"I did. *Reely*." He looked at me with drunken wariness from either side of his flattened nose. "Are you not believing me?"

"Indeed, I am."

He took a swig of stout and heaved gratefully.

"I fecht Ronnie Clayton . . . Wham!" His left hook came round in reminiscence and sent my bowler spinning to the floor. I retrieved it.

"I fecht Billy Thompson . . . Smack!" A right to the ribbon and away my hat went flying into the lap of the patriotic singer. Without faltering a send-her-victorious he zoomed it straight back. Tancy caught it and put it on his head.

"I fecht Stan Hawthorne." He hammered the bowler with a two-fisted Jeffrey Farnol chop and drove it tight as a crown-cork down to his ears.

"And I fecht Al Phillips, the Aldgate Tiger!"

"Please could I have my hat back?" I said. Suspicion clouded his face and under the low, black brim he looked like a small, mean undertaker.

"You don't believe I fecht Al Phillips, the Aldgate Tiger, do you?" he demanded aggressively.

"I do. But my hat . . ."

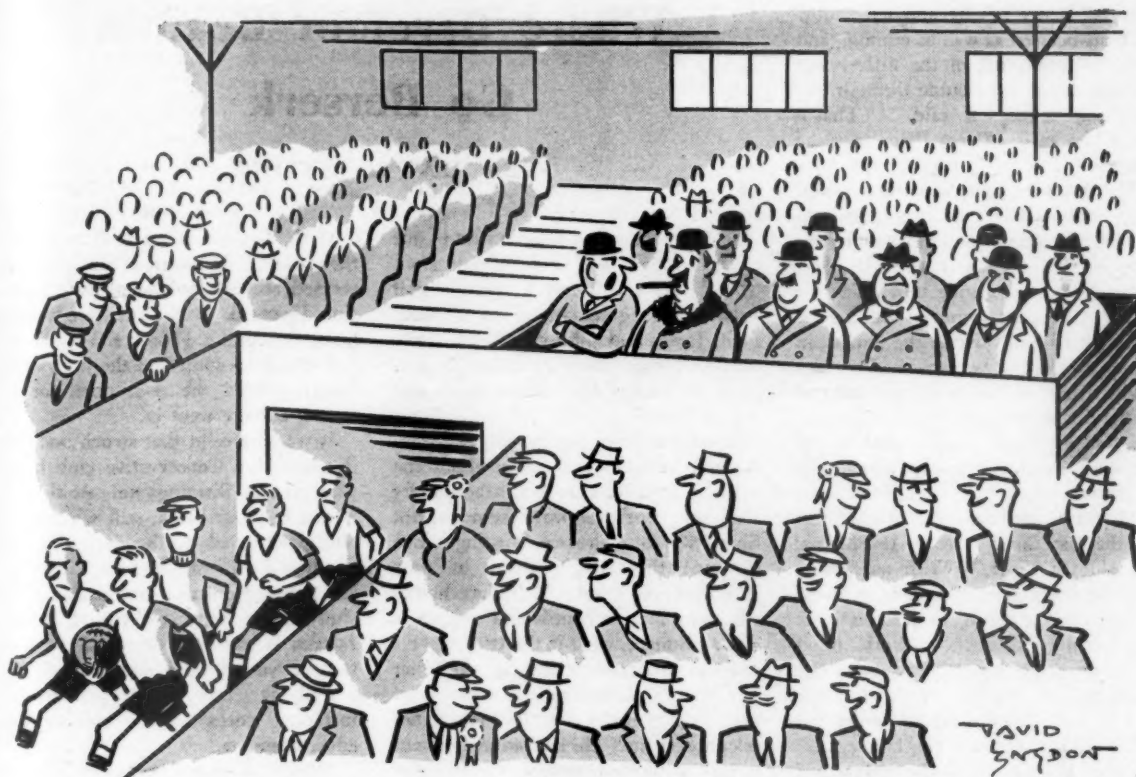
"I fecht him twice. The Aldgate Tiger. And I'll not be sitting here to be called a liar by no man."

"I wasn't calling you . . ."

"Do you see that." He pointed at his left cauliflower. "Al Phillips done that. Second time I fecht him. If you



"I'll thank you to return us to the Dolly Fenhurst Formation Team this very minute."



"Easy on the cigars. If they do strike, you're down as outside right."

don't believe me now, I'm going to hang one on that sawny great chin of yours." He doubled a gnarled fist at me. There were corns on three of the knuckles.

"I do believe you. I've already said so..."

Tancy drained the last of his stout like a man clearing up his affairs before battle.

"Teach you to believe me when I tell you I fecht the Aldgate Tiger." He swayed purposefully to his feet. I got up as well and moved to the other side of the table. He was a good two feet below me and had to lean back like a contortionist to get his eyes out from under the brim.

"By Criminy! But you're a right long drink of water, you are. When you die they're going to have to chop down special trees to make your coffin."

The darts-player came across.

"Leave him alone, Tancy," he said. "Always the same. Get a few pints on and you want to clock somebody."

"I fecht Al Phillips, Griffio," said

Tancy stubbornly. "And he don't believe me."

"But I do," I said. "You showed me your ear to prove it."

"Anyway, boy," said Griffio. "You couldn't clock him. He's too big for you. You'd never reach up there."

"I'll reach him all right. I'll climb up his bloody legs." He wobbled to his feet and heaved back the calloused fist... I backed away... then suddenly he stopped in mid-punch. "Do you know something, matey?"

"No," I said.

"You're the longest, scrawniest animal I ever saw outside flamingoes. You're that long, when I lay you out you'll stretch from here to that perishing dart-board."

Griffio stepped between us.

"Why don't you go home, chum?" he said to me. "He always wants to clock tall blokes."

"I just can't go without my hat." I couldn't leave without the bowler. There were important papers in the lining; either the secret code for M.I.5

or the formula for making lucky plastic pixies. Tancy didn't look like giving it up quietly so I resorted to strategy.

"Let's all have a drink," I said. "A pint each on me."

Griffio held his shipmate back while I bought three pints and two double-whiskies. I poured the whiskies into Tancy's stout.

"I fecht the Aldgate Tiger," he grumbled. "I ought to belt you for saying I didn't." He took my drink all the same and downed half of it. His ginger head popped up from his shoulders.

"Phwee! But that's a drop of the real old stuff!" Down went the rest in one long gulp. He belched mightily, crossed his eyes, toppled sideways on the bench and passed out cold.

"Strewth!" groaned Griffio. "But he's done it now. We've got to be aboard in half-an-hour and it'll be the brig for him if we have to carry him up the plank. That bosun's got a dead set on Tancy lately."

My ruse having worked I should

have taken my bowler and left, but I am kind-hearted as well as cunning and didn't like to think of the little boxer catching big naval trouble through me.

"Black coffee," I said. "That'll sober him up. I'll get them to make some."

The landlord obliged with a potful and, with Griffo holding him up and the happy-and-glorious minstrel pinching his cheeks, I trickled black coffee from a cream-jug down Tancy's gullet. After ten minutes feeding he came round and, just as the American doctor proclaimed, we now had a wide-awake drunk on our hands. He looked at me blank-eyed for a few seconds then, as his head stopped rolling, the old dark suspicion hawked down his eye-brows.

"I telled you," he said. "I telled you for the last time, I fecht Al Phillips, the Aldgate Tiger." With no further ado and the action of a man throwing an egg over a house, he hung a right bolo on my chin . . . fireworks burst under my scalp, my spine twanged like a tuning-fork, the floor came up at me and I went deep down into the old Philip Marlowe pool of blackness . . .

When I came round the sailors had gone and the landlord was feeding me the remains of the black coffee. My head was resting against the end-wall and my left foot was just touching the white line on the mat. That Tancy Gorbal was dead right—I did reach from there to that perishing dart-board.

Where Barefoot Beauties Go Berserk

By DAVID STONE

NOT once but many times in our rough Eel Pie Island story have I found a strange gulf between the great world as William, Paul, James and John describe it every day, and the reality as either experienced or sought out. The Chelsea Set for example.

Confronted in the street suddenly by Mr. Whicker and asked about the Chelsea Set I could reel off headlines by the score. But away from the newsprint Shangri-la of heiresses howling down (or up) the King's Road in pink Thunderbirds and M.F.H.s horse-whipping men in beards and sandals in Sloane Square, what is the truth?

I had a chance to find out the other day when a photographer I know from one of those glossy American magazines telephoned me. He had an assignment to do a picture feature on beatniks in Chelsea. I forget what that week's Chelsea sensation was, but the *Express* seemed to have more men in the Markham than in Léopoldville. Anyway, the photographer asked me to come with him that evening and show him the beatniks.

Well, Chelsea is easily found. But then where does one go? The Markham seemed the most obvious place. Outside, I paused. Both of us were wearing suits, ties, dull old black shoes. Would we be able to withstand the jeers of the beats? I held the door open for my friend, and we went in.

It was the calm that struck one first. Rather like a Conservative club in the posh part of Birmingham. At the bar, a man in sober black, stiff white collar hardly wrinkled by the day's toil, was reading the *Financial Times*. Beneath an engraved mirror, another man was studying a copy of the *Illustrated London News*. The only other people were a young man and woman who looked like that demure couple the furniture stores always use in their advertisements.

"Quiet to-night, isn't it?" I said hopefully to the woman behind the bar. "No, we don't like music," she said, and walked away.

I wondered whether to snap my fingers and murmur "Crazy, man, crazy," like those men Hickey always finds at parties. Or should I call the man in the black suit "Daddy"?

The photographer was cool in the old sense of the word.

"You're sure this is the place?" he said.

We stayed an hour during which time what looked like the entire cast of Rosmersholm came and went.

"They must be somewhere," said the photographer.

I recalled the names of two other places where younger sons of the aristocracy had told columnists of their love for barefoot art students, and we walked down the King's Road to find them. It was a peaceful evening, and though the photographer stared hard at the queue outside the Classic he had to admit in the end that the most ingenious caption-writer would be pushed to describe it as anything but a queue outside the Classic.

The first pad we went into was empty

'But how on earth
do you manage to
feed him?'



Wilkey

except for the owner and a friend playing chess.

"Chess is very popular in Chelsea these days," they remarked to the photographer. He sneered.

We went to an Indian restaurant and had a meal after this. I found conversation very difficult.

The second pad was no better. There was a very pretty girl there, but she worked at the Foreign Office and she didn't think it would help matters if she appeared in an American magazine as a crazy beat.

We walked back along the King's Road. It was very quiet.

"Eleven o'clock in Paris, man, things are really *happening*," said the photographer. There was nothing to do but agree with him.

We parted shortly after this, and I felt that my stock was very low indeed.

The photographer was on the telephone the next morning before I was up. He sounded very hostile.

"Have you seen the papers this morning?" he asked. I hadn't, but I had a premonition of what I would find, and I was right.

It was such a good story that my favourite columnist had been promoted to page one. **PEER'S SON AND BAREFOOT BEAUTY MAKE CHELSEA ROCK** was the headline. **WHEN BEATNIKS GO BERSERK** was another. It seemed that all Chelsea the previous evening had attended the hottest party since Mafeking night. Elderly club men had rushed to King's Road windows (*whose* windows?) to shout "Damn fellers" in earshot of eager journalists. Police had looked on helpless as screaming art students drank wine out of bottles. It all sounded tremendous fun. I suppose we shouldn't have had dinner. It just shows what you miss if you go into an Indian restaurant in Chelsea for half an hour these days.

☆

"Constable Whillans said later: 'The girl was unable to move, having fallen heavily, and appeared to have injured her foot and arm. I sat beside her on the ledge till help came. I spoke to her of various frivolous things and even sang. She was pretty well shocked . . .'"—*Glasgow Herald*

You're frank, anyway.

THEN AS NOW

The early appearance of Christmas problems seem to have worried our grandparents as much as us.



A CRISIS IN CONJUGAL LIFE

Fond Husband. "LOOK HERE, ETHEL, I SEE YOU DAILY GETTING THINNER AND PALER; YOU CANNOT EAT, YOU CANNOT SLEEP, WHILE I FIND LIFE A BURDEN TO ME. I CAN BEAR IT NO LONGER! LET US MAKE A BARGAIN. IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO GIVE ME A CHRISTMAS PRESENT, I'LL PROMISE NOT TO GIVE YOU ONE. THERE!"

October 21, 1893



I Wished the Floor Would Open

THE Bore. Difficult to know what to do about him when return hospitality involved. In personal case solved this by taking him to cocktail party at club. Stood him in conspicuous position, let him sway on heels, introduced one or two friends with speed, hoping they'd circulate warning about man holding astonishing bright green drink (hoked-up *crème-de-menthe*, one of the things he's boring about).

Worked well for a time. Then bore found natural bent irresistible, emerged from corner and trotted off in pursuit of victims. Found some. Glazed eyes increasing in number. Did what I could to offer relief by breaking into his

interminable narratives with bright remarks, but couldn't fail to notice looks of hatred directed at me.

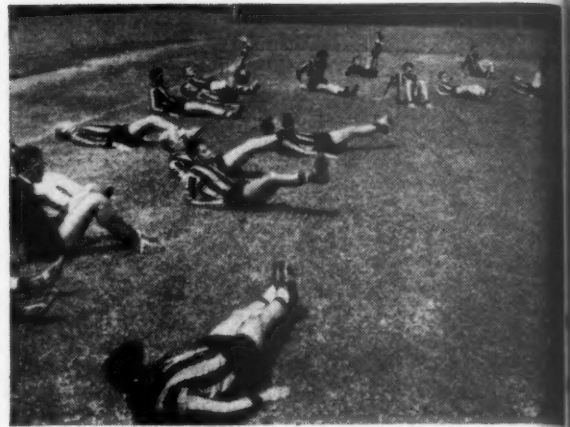
At last got him away and nobly took personal share of burden, ordering fortifying drinks from waiter, and listened to endless waggish story. Waiter thrust drink into hand. Went on listening, fascinated.

Sudden hush that one sometimes gets at these affairs. Shrill female voice saying "... the biggest bore I've ever met ... over there drinking the hideous green stuff ..."

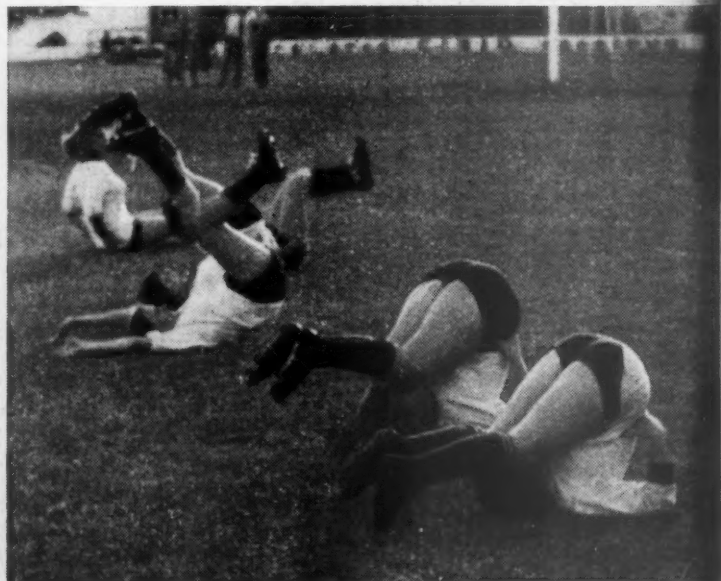
Took great swig at drink to hide deep embarrassment. Devastating realization that waiter distributed wrong drinks. Mine green, peppermint ... — A. W.

WHEN THEY STRUCK

The long-heralded strike of professional footballers took the country by surprise. Many teams were already changed for Saturday's games when they learnt of the decision. (Right) Plymouth Argyle staged a sit-down strike on the spot.



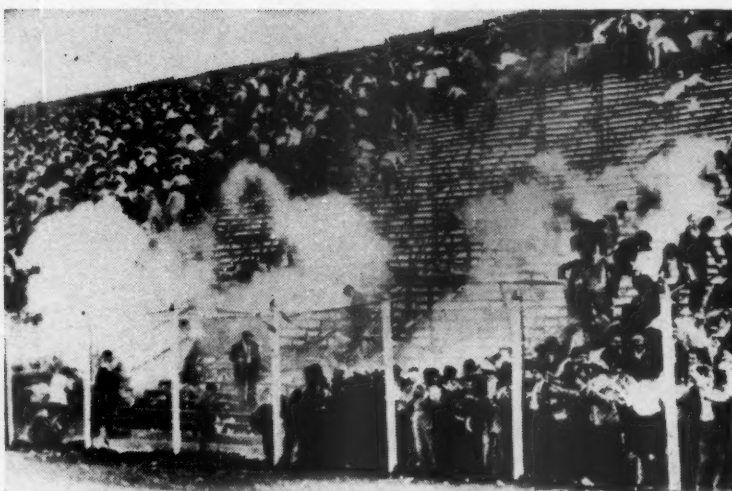
Elsewhere of course the army was called in. *Left:* A contingent of the Grenadier Guards receiving instruction in positional play. They later played an Army Catering Corps XI. *Right:* A Sergeant-Cook being helped back to barracks after scoring the winning goal.



The big pools companies, anxious not to disappoint customers, asked their employees for volunteers to substitute for teams on strike. *Left:* Littlewoods girls in play. *Right:* Vernons girls in training.



The School of Unarmed Combat staged a very popular match.



The success of these measures provoked the strikers into staging a mass demonstration at the City v. Treasury match at White Hart Lane. Several hundred footballers broke through the hastily erected barriers and mobbed the players with cries of "Blackleg." Fortunately a company of United Nations troops were on the spot and, with the help of tear-gas, dispersed the demonstrators after several rattle charges.

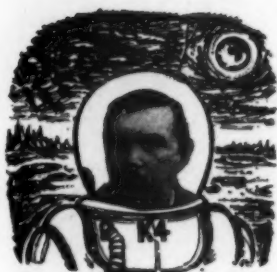


Next day a march of disappointed pools punters who, according to the law of averages, must have won this week was halted by police on its way to present a petition of protest to the Minister of Labour.



Once again PUNCH Industrial Unrest camera team was there!

PUNCH'S contribution to SF



Conan Doyle in Space

The Strange Affair of the Outer Circle

By EVOE

IT was not long after his return from Sussex that Holmes and I took a lease of the luxurious flat which had replaced our old lodgings in Baker Street. There installed we would not infrequently pay a visit to the new Planetarium, less than a hundred yards away, and spend the evening discussing the mysterious movements of the heavenly bodies.

My friend was in a particularly thoughtful mood on one of these occasions when, as we sat in our armchairs, he murmured "Have you ever considered, Watson, how different from our own autumn must be the seasonal change in the Planet Pluto which takes two hundred and fifty of our years to complete a single revolution round the sun?"

I was meditating a suitable rejoinder to this observation when by a strange irony of circumstance we heard a thunderous banging at our door, as though a madman had assailed it. We opened it to reveal a figure in dishevelled attire, and in the last stages of exhaustion, with a look of horror in his eyes such as I have never before seen on any human countenance. Staggering about the room he waved his two fists in the air and beat his head several times against the wall, dislodging one of my cherished Zulu assegais.

"Brandy!" commanded Holmes.

When we had plied him with the restorative and loosened his collar, what was our amazement to perceive writhing on the sofa the well-known and much photographed figure of the Minister for Hypersonic Affairs.

Between gasps and groans, he began to unfold the reasons for this unexpected visitation.

"You know, of course," he said, "that a certain Eastern Power that shall be nameless is attempting to launch an envoy, accompanied by a variety of domesticated fauna, into Space? The reasons are supposed to be scientific and the Americans are naturally competing with a similar enterprise. We now learn from our secret sources of information that this—"

"This nameless power," suggested Holmes, with a smile.

"—has a further design up her sleeve. Her scientists have concocted a plan in connection with this ascent, so nefarious, so dastardly, that if realized it will enable them to plunge all the six continents of the earth into chaos and perpetual night."

"The rascals!" I cried.

"It is a virus," he continued, "or perhaps I should say an opiate, which destroys all will-power, all desire for activity, thought, and progress. Disseminated, it will put an end to

technical achievement, the nexus of trade, the very spirit of Democracy. Starvation will stalk the globe. The hand will fall from the plough, the fingers fail at the typewriter. Bulldozers will lie in the ditches. Savagery, nay, even cannibalism, will proliferate. Civilization as we know it will end."

"Tut, tut, this is grave news," said Sherlock. "Would you kindly be rather more explicit about the functions of the machine?"

"It is a contrivance," replied the Minister, "which by means of a diffusory projectile shot from a space-car as it encircles the earth is enabled to pierce the non-gravitational zone and impregnate with its foul fumes the whole terrestrial atmosphere."

"A squirt," interjected my friend. His keen intelligence had pounced like a hawk on the very heart of the imbroglio.

"Precisely. And now let me apologize Mr. Holmes, for my somewhat abrupt and irregular arrival. I have run all the way from Downing Street, since the strike on the Underground and the congestion of vehicular traffic rendered any other means of approach impossible. But I do earnestly entreat you to help us if you can in this supreme emergency."

I had myself in the meantime been pondering on the various implications of this diabolical stratagem.

"Will not the weapon," I suggested, "rebound like a boomerang on those who utilize it? They will be hoist, or perhaps I should rather say depressed, by their own petard?"

"It was a point that I was about to propound myself," said Holmes, "but our good friend Watson anticipated me."

"They are being immunized by the thousand every week with a cunning bacterial inoculation."

"I will see what I can do," said Holmes as he showed our unhappy guest to the door, and then turned to me.

"Run like a hare to the tobacconist, Watson," he instructed me, "we have no time to lose."

For three days Holmes sat huddled in his chair without food or drink, while the smoke wreathed from his ancient briar in so thick a cloud that passers in the street took alarm, and on two occasions at least the fire-engine was summoned. On the morning of the fourth day the old gleam came into his eye, his figure stiffened, and "Watson," he cried, "I think I have the solution."

"I thought our opponents had that," I said foolishly.

But he brushed my feeble witticism aside and sprang to the telephone.

I have mentioned more than once in my memoirs that there are occasions in the life of my friend when his supreme self-confidence suffered a setback as though ambition, in the words of the poet, had o'erleapt itself; and the world will not soon forget the dreadful accident, seemingly trivial at first, that befell the great detective only a few days later when he slipped and damaged his head while struggling to mount a No. 2 bus to Victoria. Unexpected complications followed and brain fever most unhappily supervened.

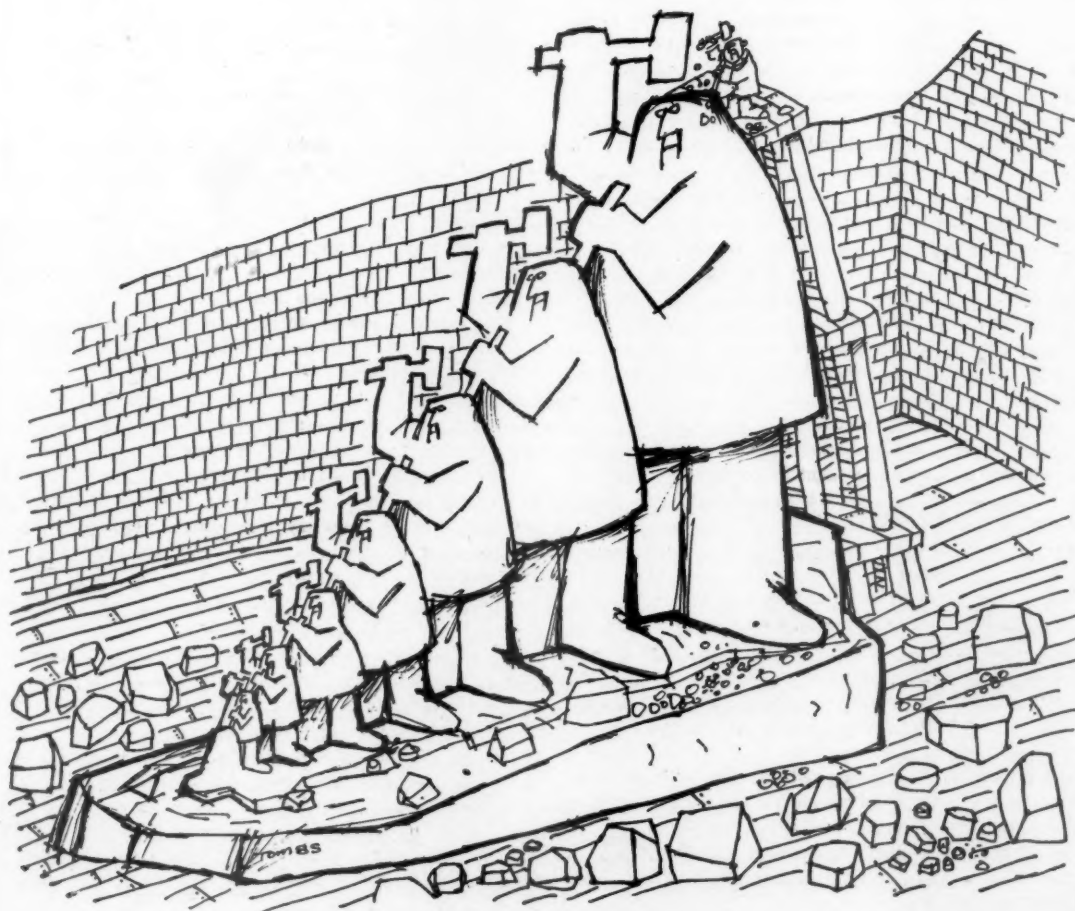
Messages of condolence naturally poured in from all the Crowned Heads, the Dictators and the Prime Ministers not only of Europe but the farthest isles of the outer seas, including even Galapagos and Waijiu, where the Episode of the Carnivorous Cabbages is still held in lively remembrance by the grateful aborigines.

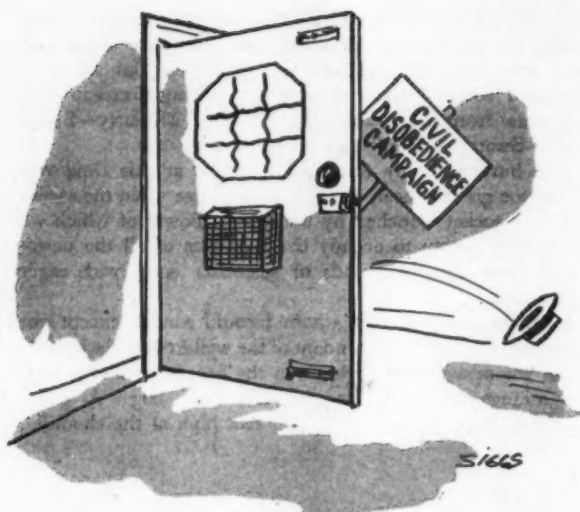
But my poor friend, alas, could not appreciate these tokens of sympathy. He was kept in seclusion and unable to see

visitors; and even I myself, despite our years of friendship, despite my medical qualifications, was only once allowed to peep into his room. I saw nothing there but his pale bandaged face, and heard no more than a string of meaningless sentences from which only the words "Moriarty—Silver Blaze—Swamp Adder," clearly emerged.

The burden of my terrible knowledge at this time was almost too great to bear, and it became worse when the ascent of a new rocket launched by the distant Power of which we had spoken began to occupy the headlines of all the newspapers and set the minds of scientists agog with eager speculation.

I had no companion in whom I could confide except our great dog, Beowulf, a descendant of the well-known Baskerville strain whom we had bought from the breeder not long after our strange adventure on the Dartmoor bog. A grand specimen, he stood well over four feet high at the shoulder,





even when the hackles were unraised. Now he would walk sadly to Holmes's chair, whine piteously, and return to his basket with a weary sigh.

As I sat there with him one evening thinking over the many dramas in which Holmes and I had figured the door opened quietly to admit, as I imagined, Evelina, the great-niece of Mrs. Hudson, and now our daily help; but turning my head I perceived my mistake immediately. It was a stranger. Yet for all that, to my vast amazement Beowulf sprang upon him with barks of delight and began to lick him about the neck and chin, despite his singular, not to say astounding, choice of evening attire. He wore a mask and a helmet like the visor of a mediæval knight, a metal cuirass and thick rubber overalls, the trousers of which ended in feet like those of a gigantic frog. Was it a madman who had entered the apartment? And if so, could it possibly be—? The thought had scarcely entered my mind when there came to my ears the best-loved voice in all the world uttering with complete calm and self-possession the simple words "Good evening, Watson, the nights are drawing in."

My head swam, my senses reeled. Question after question chased through my mind only to be rejected, until at last I managed to stammer out "Holmes, my dear, dear fellow, so they've let you out!"

"Out of what?"

"Your Loon—your Mental Home."

"I never was in it."

"But I saw you there!"

"A passable imitation, Watson. My simulacrum in wax from Madame Tussaud's."

"But I heard you speak!"

"A tape-recorder under the bed."

"Then where in heaven or earth have you been?"

"Recently in neither."

And then, little by little, he began to recount the story of perhaps the most heroic and bewildering exploit that has ever adorned the annals of human history.

"I shall not weary you," he said, "with the methods I adopted of crossing the forbidden frontier, or worming my way into the good graces of the Alien Power that lies beyond.

Suffice it to say that I secured false identity papers and represented myself as a descendant of an old Nihilist family, the local conservative stock from which so many of the most brilliant of our adversaries have sprung. It helped me not a little, too, that I was able to hurl the discus farther than their most redoubtable athletes, and to outpace them as easily as I once, on a famous occasion, outpaced you and the panting Lestrade. Finally, out of a hundred thousand applicants, I was chosen as Orbiter Number One, the first ambassador of that republic to engirdle the globe.

"I was entrusted with the awful Atomizer which would destroy the brains of mankind and reduce the inhabitants of the world to imbecile submission. I knew also the secret of its preventative. I was dressed as you see me now. I was encased in the mechanism of the Spatiometer. All was ready for a start, and then to my chagrin I saw that instead of the various animals—a yak, a couple of Chinese geese, and some white mice—with which I had hoped to make the journey, I was to be accompanied by a human fellow passenger, one of their secret service men. I might have guessed it. They never permit an emissary to go abroad without a spy to report on his movements.

"So here we were, shut in together, only a foot apart, surrounded by complicated instruments, he the enemy, I the friend, of all that makes terrestrial life hopeful and endurable."

"And what happened next?" I queried in an agony of suspense.

"A time had been given us at which to actuate the controls. I intended of course to disobey my injunctions, but I could see that my sinister companion was not so minded. At zero hour his hand went out to touch the button that would plunge three quarters of the dwellers on earth into the condition of stupefied apes. I dealt him an upper-cut to the chin and almost at the same moment the whole of the space-car disintegrated into fragments and I became unconscious for a while."

"And then?"

"I found myself floating in the sea, a contingency for which my present clothes had been designed. By an extraordinary stroke of luck I recognized my whereabouts. I was close to St. Michael's Mount, which gave me some encouragement as a symbol that the Powers of Good were about to prevail. My fellow traveller was floating by my side, but he was no swimmer and would have perished had I not dragged him ashore. He is now under lock and key in the hands of the sturdy Cornish police."

"And you, Holmes?"

"I chartered a helicopter at Penzance without troubling to change my clothes. It dropped me ten minutes ago in the middle of Queen Mary's Rose Garden."

"Really, Holmes, this is well-nigh incredible!"

"It was a queer trip," he admitted, "and I shall have much to say to-morrow to the Prime Minister. I hold in my notebook all the details of their infernal chemistry, and am in a position to counter any further move they may make. In the meantime, when I have discarded this outfit, let us stroll to the Æolian Hall and listen to a little good music."

Coming:
JOHN GALWORTHY
JAMES JOYCE

ERNEST HEMINGWAY
D. H. LAWRENCE

Con Amore

By R. G. G. PRICE

MR. P. G. WODEHOUSE has explained that whenever the moguls of Broadway feel a musical is getting snarled up in plot they order "Bring on the girls," and this, of course, is a formula used also in landscape painting, crime fiction and films about cattle-rustlers. Sex has recently spread to the literature of war and even of exploration. Historical novelists get away with quite frightful things and I have even met some sultry reading in novels about internecine warfare in the world of finance.

Literature, however, is a vast field and never completely tilled. There may be pulse-stirring stuff in space fiction and autobiography and farce and even hints in topographical verse but there will still be corners that have yet to be hotted up. I add some suggestive extracts.

From *A New Middle School Algebra*

Tom, Dick and Harry date Mary, Ann and Betty. If Mary lets Tom go twice as far as Ann lets Harry...

From *A Guide to the Ceremonies of the University of Oxford*

Entrancing in their furry hoods, the Bachelors from the Women's Colleges move forward on their high heels to receive the Degree of Master and assume the flowing hemline, the fascinating pierced sleeves and the wine-red hood of Masters of Arts. The sharp outline of the rectangular mortarboard seems to emphasize the melting softness of the eyes beneath. Addressing each in Latin the Vice-Chancellor...

From *How to Clean Up British Boxing*

... under Rule XXXVI. One cause of fouls is undoubtedly over-anxiety to win owing to the presence in ringside seats of girl-friends. Intent on hitting his opponent for six, the welter-weight suddenly catches sight of a vision in enticing head-scarf, with tight sweater and liquid lips, as she leans forward

glowing and breathing hard, reminding him of past delights and delights to come if he can earn them, radiant and bewitching and nubile to her smooth, red fingertips. The use of metal in the gloves...

From *Studies in Early Rumanian Philology*

... glottal stop. In a paper read at a Congress in Oslo, Dr. Hilda Wunf argued that the Minden-Mulfgang theory over-estimated the time-lag in prepositional development. Tall and fine and blonde, she stood at the lectern like some rare Valkyrie and not a scholar present but his heart swelled and throbbed at the sight of her strong, firm teeth and her arms, so capable of bending the stoutest bow or cleaving a helm with one stroke of an axe. Her thighs, swelling beneath her black tweed skirt, and her primeval feet matched well with the harsh blue light that sparked from her hard, clear eye...

From *A Thames Valley Recipe Book*

... until thoroughly stewed. Being calory-free, Slough Cold Pie will not put an ounce on to the slim, fluent form of the most gluttonous yet figure-conscious young woman. As she rubs her pliant shoulders against the back of the dining-room chair in an ecstasy of greed, as her pimperlips part in a radiant welcome to the dish, as she whispers "Oh yes, yes," when offered a second helping, she need have no fear of padding out those shallow pelvic curves. When served with a sprig of parsley the recipe is known as Stoke Poges Cold Pie...

From *A Primer of Conjuring*

... satisfy the audience that the lady is firmly held in the frame before you pick up the saw. Then linger. Let the audience look at those soft, shapely legs in their sheer silk as they vanish provocatively into the delusive protection of the abbreviated skirt. Gaze down on

her as she lies extended at your mercy, palpitating, smiling invitingly, feminine, grappled by bands of steel...

From *The Macedonian Question 1943-57*

... Mixed Arbitration Commission. No one can fail to see the strong Hellenic influence in the young girls of the region as at evening they tuck up their skimpy dresses and, giggling with shy lasciviousness, paddle barefoot in the stream, crying out somewhat broad jests at any youths who are caught spying on them. These nymphs, with their dark eyes that shoot fire and laughter and their graceful necks and their proud, well-developed busts, are a thousand years, a thousand miles away from the sultry, statuesque beauties of the great Slavonic plains. At the census of 1933...

From *Revised Winter Timetable, Mid-Wessex Bus Service*

aa Sats only. Continues to Girls' Remand Home, giving passengers just long enough.



"Other jumpers from Peter Cazalet's stable worth nothing this week are King, Hal's Hope and Fier Chimiste."

Sunday Times

They're ringing their solicitors.



Put Down the White Man's Burden

By J. E. HINDER

Discussing a proposal to merge the Colonial and Commonwealth Relations Offices, the Colonial Office Permanent Under-Secretary spoke of the uncertain position of the staff if the Department goes on declining "until it is left with St. Helena and Tristan da Cunha." Here follow extracts from a diary kept in the last years of the Secretary of State

ST. HELENA. *Sept. 1st 1992.*—Establishment now down to three with departure of Miss Chivers and Fountainblow. How will it all end? Raining heavily. No telegrams for a week. Have done *Times* crossword five times. Keep brooding on Bonaparte. *Sept. 10th.*—Still raining. Last Saturday's *Times* received. Great news!

Volcanic island has appeared off Eastbourne. Undoubtedly one of ours. Have telegraphed P.M. to that effect. Feel much better and have opened magnum of sparkling Nigerian Tokay to drink health of new Colony.

Sept. 15th.—No news *re* island. Telegrams include details of more luck for Himmelblue at Commonwealth

Relations Office. Louisiana wants to join. That makes fifteen new ones in the past year, not counting places of doubtful status such as West Wales and Arran. What would great-grandfather have thought a hundred years ago? Must be turning in his mausoleum. Upset. Thought I saw cloaked figure outside last night. Must try to keep calm. Raining.

Sept. 30th.—Heard from F.O. that young Percy Rbumah is to be President of new Afro-Arabian Confederation of Greater Ghana, Sub-Libya and the Egypto-Congolese Sudan. United Central African Democratic Capitalists' Republic stays outside for time being. However, what can it mean to me out here in the middle of the ocean? Nothing! I mustn't pretend otherwise. How different it might have been! No news of New Eastbournia—I have decided to call the volcanic island by this name. Violent headache. Should have heard from Whitehall by now. Saw him again.

Oct. 17th.—Black day. Whitehall informs me New Eastbournia to be joined to pier and administered by Eastbourne Corporation. Worst blow since Rockall seceded. Very depressed. Thinking of asking to be relieved. Must escape from this awful place! He looked through window last night.

Oct. 18th.—See it all now! Feel quite different—different person altogether! Sir Hudson Lowe nowhere to be seen. Good! I shall land at Cherbourg—they will rally to me as they did after Elba—a whiff of grapeshot—casualties?—one night in plaster-of-paris will cure all that!—*Sauve. qui peut.* Wellington . . .

(Here the diary breaks off. The writer was found dead by a party of Marines a week later. Part of the diary had been eaten by goats. Shortly after, of course, St. Helena achieved its independence within the Commonwealth . . .)



Essence of Parliament

IT has been a livelier week at Westminster than they have had for some time: motor-cars (Ford's and otherwise), pensions, Army recruiting, the birch, and Mr. Nabarro—all have made their separate contributions to the gaiety of nations. The Lords have weighed in with Monckton. What fun it all was! The week started off with everyone het up about redundancy in the Midlands. The motor-men stormed up to the Central Lobby and besieged their M.P.s—all the males and Edith Pitt too, until they had to be rescued by policemen. By Tuesday it was still motor-cars, motor-cars all the way, but the issue had changed somewhat. It was then Ford's and the American money, and when is a take-over bid not a take-over bid? Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, like Brer Rabbit, "lay low and said nuffin'." He had not received any official application and till he had received one he could express no opinion. He would make a statement to the House—some time, on Monday at latest, but he could make no promise that he would not have given his decision before he made his statement. America is a red rag to all sorts of bulls these days, and any suggestion that Americans are planning to do anything arouses all sorts of suspicions alike on the Right and on the Left. It was hard to say which side of the House was the more worried. Mr. Martin Lindsay and Mr. Cleaver protested from the Right. Mr. Parker and Mr. Lipton tried to move the adjournment of the House from the Left. Mr. Harold Wilson said that he would question Mr. Lloyd again on Wednesday. But, come Wednesday, Mr. Wilson had changed his mind. He did not question Mr. Lloyd. He questioned Mr. Butler instead, and that is a very different kettle of fish. Mr. Lloyd when he does not want to answer a question just sits still. If he cannot give a promise he says straight out that he cannot give a promise.

What the Butler does is very different. All questions to Mr. Butler are automatically funny, all answers anybody's guess what they mean. Mr. Lloyd sat there silent. Mr. Butler sat by his side and ostentatiously turned to Mr. Lloyd to ask him the answer to every question, then gave the answer in his own peculiar way. It was all rich comedy.

Mr. Butler asks for the Answers

Mr. Mellish was moved to ask in anger what Mr. Lloyd was paid for if he could not speak for himself; but although indeed nobody imagines that Mr. Lloyd can speak for himself, yet it is only fair to him to record that on this occasion he had not been asked to do so. All the questions had been addressed to Mr. Butler. The House did not get very much farther. Not for the first time in his distinguished career Mr. Butler had clearly never intended that it should.

In that strange intellect, where almost all things are unclear, one thing at least about Mr. Butler seems tolerably clear. He is determined not to be birched. He has decided that it would be too ridiculous to bring back flogging, and therefore the unanimous recommendation of the Barry Committee against

its reintroduction just before the Criminal Justice debate suited him very well. Not—we may well surmise—that he would have changed his own opinion or done anything different had their report been the other way. But committees are very useful things when they are on your side. They then become automatically high-powered, and Mr. Butler generously praised them as such. Mr. Gordon Walker echoed his praise. What the British public thinks is a rather different matter. The Gallup boys claim that the majority of the British public is in favour of the reintroduction of flogging—and they may well be right. Yet the British public, even if it is in favour of flogging, at the same time finds faintly comic anyone who sets himself up as a persistent advocate of its reintroduction.

Poor Sir Thomas Moore—perhaps intentionally, perhaps unintentionally, perhaps half and half—has built himself up into one of the great comic figures of the nation and of the House—the leader of a cause that is destined immemorially to be loved and lost. It is all well enough—and far be it from this column to complain of jokes—but this flogging

farce has its disadvantages. There is little chance that flogging will come back, but the absurd controversy prevents the public mind from paying much attention to the very serious problems of criminal justice—attendance centres, better detection and the like. For that reason this debate was a little disappointing.

There were other colourful little touches during the week—the ineffectual attempt to make a case of privilege out of Mr. Nabarro's crack about calling a coward a coward; a vigorous speech from Mr. Tiley (whose speeches are always vigorous) about pensions; a good but perhaps slightly too obviously prefabricated joke from Mr. Cledwyn Hughes. The Government's policy towards Wales, said Mr. Hughes, was "to pump all the water out of the country and to pump all the beer into it." It was good enough, but one suspected that it

had done duty somewhere or other before. Then there were arguments about the recruiting figures. I owe an apology to honourable Members. I wrote last week that not one of them had raised a cheep about Mr. Watkinson's confusions about recruiting figures. Before they raise the complaint as a matter of privilege, let me record that this week they amply made amends. Both sides of the House came gallantly to the charge. The great Colonel Wigg, as was only right, led off a day before the rest on Tuesday. On Wednesday the full bombardment broke—Mr. Harrison from the Conservative benches, Mr. Strachey and Mr. Brown from the Socialist. Beyond the fact that Mr. Watkinson made his statement at Devizes

not in his considered speech but in answer to a question, neither sets of questioners had much success.

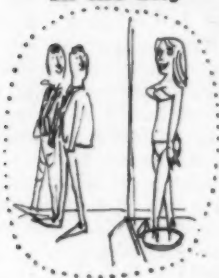
The Lords' main dish for the week was Monckton. It was a responsible but not a lively debate, perhaps mainly interesting for the Duke of Devonshire's confident debut at the dispatch box. Lord Milverton and Lord Reith threatened woe. Other noble lords talked sense but talked it rather as if they were not themselves particularly interested in what they were saying. This was particularly true of Lord Silkin, who wound up for the Opposition in a speech quite good in matter but delivered as if it was to him a matter of infinite weariness to make a speech at all. Far different was Lord Hailsham winding up for the Government. Admitting his lack of expert knowledge of Central Africa, he treated their lordships instead to a remarkable and moving Christian sermon on the essential equality of man. It was a moving performance and shows that Lord Hailsham's mind moves on other planes from those of most politicians.

—PERCY SOMERSET



MR. SELWYN LLOYD

In the City



Detroit Wants the Lot

IN the brouhaha aroused by the Ford takeover bid a number of basic facts are being overlain by emotions.

The British Ford company was originally all American. During the inter-war years Detroit thought it good policy to let some of the equity go to British shareholders. It was a wise move. Experience of international organizations has shown that it is an advantage to mobilize local vested interests in the ownership of a foreign project. The enlistment of British shareholders in this particular enterprise has proved extremely beneficial to all concerned. It has brought good income and magnificent capital appreciation to the shareholders. It has also served the Ford Organization.

Throughout, however, Detroit has been in control. At the time of its takeover bid it held 54.6 per cent of the Ordinary shares. The bid, equivalent to 145s. per share, is for the 45.4 per cent held outside the controlling interest. The bid is worth a fabulous £129 million, or about £43 million more than the value of these shares before the bid was made.

It has been argued in the City that this is a mean offer and that Ford shares are worth appreciably more than Detroit are offering. Maybe, taking a very long-term view, they are. But the great virtue of a free market—and the Stock Exchange market in Ford shares has been very free indeed—is that it provides a faithful mirror of the collective wisdom of thousands of investors.

Their view had never put Ford shares higher than 120s. 3d. quoted earlier this year. They stood at 91s. 3d. just before the bid was made. A price of 145s. looks generous. If it is not, what on earth were its critics doing when the shares stood more than 50s. lower?

If Detroit are prepared to pay so much higher a price for the shares, the implication must be that they have great faith in their British offshoot. And yet some of the criticism hurled at the proposal in Parliament and elsewhere

would lead one to believe that Detroit are prepared to dismantle Dagenham and to call a halt in the company's development plans as soon as their ownership of the British company becomes complete. This is not how American businessmen behave with their own money.

There are many possible reasons to account for Detroit's wish to convert mere control of the U.K. Ford company into total ownership. One could be a wish to use dollars in order to buy sterling equities. Another is the emergence of the European Common Market which will call for far greater co-operation between the Ford offshoots in Europe. The necessary flexibility can be secured far more easily if all these subsidiaries are wholly owned than if regard has to be had for the interests of independent shareholders.

One party which will not be pleased with the deal is the U.S. Treasury whose gold reserve is already under pressure and must be further depleted if the

equivalent of £129 million has to be found by Detroit in order to pay off the holders of Ford Ordinary shares.

Many of these holders must already be considering what to do with the cash if and when it reaches their bank accounts. One good piece of advice to them would be to invest in other motor shares at least the profit they will all have made on their holding of Ford shares. Motor shares have been depressed lately and though there has been some recovery since the Ford bid was made they are still below the highest points reached this year.

The motion of confidence which has just been passed by Detroit in U.K. Fords is also a motion of confidence in other parts of the British motor-car industry. What is good for Fords should in the long run be good for British Motor Corporation, Jaguars and Rootes. These three shares may have to be nursed for a little while, but they will ultimately turn out very bonny babies.

— LOMBARD LANE

* * *

In the Country



Mallard Imaginaire

I'VE always been slightly envious of the American duck shooter ever since I came across the "Quacker," an improbable cork mallard with twenty yards of pneumatic hose attached to a brass pipe in its backside. The idea, beautiful in its simplicity, was this. You put the decoy out on water and then retired to your hide, paying out pneumatic hose behind you. When the sky began to darken with mallard, and possibly canvas backs as well, you put your foot hard on the large, old-type motor-horn bulb at the end of the pipe and pressed down hard. This drove a powerful draught of air down the pipe, up the brass plug, and through a reed hidden in the decoy's throat.

Lest you feel that the Quacker was unfair to ducks, let me now report that the duck hunters of the U.S.A. have gone further.

In one of those two million circulation magazines for men I came across, between advertisements for a Bowie knife and Seven Stereo Symphonies, the following: "PASS SHOOTERS . . . Lure 'em with a PLASTIPOND . . . Carry your own forty square yards of water in your pocket, and pull 'em out of the flyway like homing doves."

The Plastipond, it turned out, was a large, irregularly shaped sheet of shiny material which you laid out, perfidiously, on perfectly dry land to kid unsophisticated ducks that here was bed and board for the night. The illustration showed a duck hunter, complete with red checked shirt, red peaked cap, and automatic shotgun the size of a bazooka, sitting behind a clump of reeds (fibre-glass, in all likelihood, and an extra to the basic kit), surveying his subterfuge. On the plastic water sat six plastic decoys. Maybe there was a Quacker amongst them, though, if there was, the pipe was pretty cunningly hidden. Behind the hunter lay an impressive and ever-rising pile of real dead ducks.

I doubt whether the Plastipond will do much to reduce the duck population. I'm much more worried about the traumatic effects of all this. Imagine the feelings of a mallard who has trustingly lowered his undercarriage for a two pointer on a Plastipond, only to trip over the rubber hosepipe activating the girl friend, who lured him in with her siren song.

— COLIN WILLOCK

Man in Office

by *Larry*





AT THE PLAY

Progress to the Park (THEATRE ROYAL, STRATFORD)

WORKING-CLASS Liverpool is the scene of *Progress to the Park*, which illustrates the murderous and childish religious bigotry that Irish immigrants have brought with them. This can scarcely be called a play, its construction is so loose, its plot so slender; some of Alun Owen's dialogue is fresh and amusing, but it cannot disguise an almost total lack of development.

Liverpool is shown as a mirror to Belfast, its Protestants and Roman Catholics living in the same unChristian state of mind. If neighbours are in opposite camps they treat one another as infectious criminals, and on the Twelfth of July the marching Orangemen put a match to passions never far below the surface. Mr. Owen's story, that gets lost for whole scenes in talk for talk's sake, is about a Protestant boy who rediscovers a childhood love for a Roman Catholic girl, to the near-apoplexy of their parents, and finding that while he has been

away at sea she has slept with all his friends, is finally persuaded by them that this is Liverpool life and must be accepted.

A very good set by John Bury establishes the atmosphere of a shabby street and pub, and atmosphere remains the biggest dividend in the evening, until one begins to

REP. SELECTION

Birmingham Rep, *Hobson's Choice*, until December 17.

Perth Theatre, *Much Ado About Nothing*, until November 26.

Leatherhead Theatre, *The Father*, until November 26.

Bromley Rep, *Time Limit* (new play), until November 26.

know intimately his aimless young men who devote their Sundays to hip-flasks and fornication. Their leader, who obviously speaks for the author, is a clever Welshman who views both sides in the running religious war with impartial levity, having already made good his escape from Liverpool through writing scripts for TV. He

is quite entertaining, and well played by Tom Bell. The acting, like the production, is patchy, but Sean Lynch and Billie Whitelaw are good as the lovers, and Michael Coles and Roy Kinnear have the air of being authentic Liverpool characters. It is a great pity that Mr. Owen has been snared by the fashion for write-as-you-please drama, for I am sure he has something much better in him.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Ross (Haymarket—18/5/60), Rattigan on T. E. Lawrence. *A Passage to India* (Comedy—27/4/60), Forster's novel very well adapted. *She Stoops to Conquer* (Old Vic—16/11/60), spirited revival.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Suspect

Blitz on Britain

Private Property

IT is announced that *Suspect* (Directors: Roy and John Boulting) is "an experiment in raising the level of the supporting feature": it was made inexpensively in a short time, but with intelligence and foresight. It doesn't get a central London showing, and it seems to me very much better in many ways than plenty of first features that do get one. Its quality depends precisely on the things that need not be expensive. No very big stars, no elaborate sets or armies of extras or time-consuming distant location work, no wide screen, no colour, nothing spectacular—just a 'basically interesting story, rooted in contemporary life, and understandable, credible characters faced with a contemporary problem, the whole well written and acted and directed with straightforward competence.

There is effective action and suspense here, but much of the strength of the piece is in the dialogue, argument and discussion—which, I admit, ought not really to be a notably important part of any film. But when it is written as well as this (Nigel Balchin did the screenplay, adapting his own novel *A Sort of Traitors*), and the people who argue and discuss are made so entertainingly individual, the result can be absorbing.

The central situation is that a biological discovery of immense potential benefit to the whole of mankind is censored, under the Official Secrets Act, because some enemy might conceivably use it as a weapon. The leading scientist (Peter Cushing) and his research team are outraged, and one of them (Tony Britton) is



Teifion Davies—TOM BELL

[*Progress to the Park*]

tempted into trying to defeat the ban. Will M.I.5 (amusing portrait by Thorley Walters of an apparently vague and bumbling security boss) stop him in time? It's an intelligent, ironic picture with much good playing, for people who know the pleasure of using their minds and don't just want to relax while someone massages—or batters—their emotions.

The other half of the programme is a documentary, *Blitz on Britain* (Director and editor: Harry Booth), with commentary written and spoken by Alistair Cooke. What a treat it is to hear a literate commentary! I hadn't realized how unquestioningly we'd got into the way of accepting a mixture of cheap rhetoric and burly facetiousness as the normal accompaniment of any such factual compilation as this.

It has been made from official British and German pictures of the war, in the air and elsewhere: the first full record of the Battle of Britain, set in its context from the invasion of Holland and Belgium on May 10, 1940, to the great fire raid on London a year later. The range is wide enough to include not only a glimpse of German soldiers climbing the legs of the Eiffel Tower but also one of Myra Hess playing at one of the National Gallery midday concerts. Almost my only objection is to the very brief, very occasional staged shots. Both in visual quality and in atmosphere these (e.g. a flash of a "typical" family being inspired as they listen to a Churchill broadcast, or a quick close shot of two or three people passing on rumours) are distractingly out of key with the rest of the picture, which breathes authenticity and is fascinating for that reason.

Private Property (Director: Leslie Stevens) is the first film to be shown at the new "club" cinema, the Compton: an "X" film, of course—though the "X" here indicates the presence of certain motives and incidents genuinely beyond the understanding of the simple and ignorant, as well as the sort of sexual frankness so many of them eagerly queue for. It is the account of the deliberate seduction of a young married woman by a smooth, superficially likeable young brute who plans to let a dull-witted, boorish, lustful friend take over when she gives in. Yes, I know it sounds dreadful and disgusting; but the film is made well, with some excellent moments and quite a bit of harsh, wry humour, and the striking new actress called Kate Manx is very well worth seeing.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

About *G.I. Blues*, a pretty conventional U.S. Army comedy in colour, there is a welcome suggestion of tongue-in-cheek (e.g. Elvis Presley often shows a certain derisive disrespect for his songs, and at one point during one of them a man switches on a Presley record with a cry of "I wanna hear the original"), and it gives a real chance to the attractive and



"Tom! I've been pinched!"

intelligent Juliet Prowse. Also in London: *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60), *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60), *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (28/9/60), and *Can-Can* (30/3/60)—and *The Alamo* (9/11/60) is fine to look at, less so to listen to.

The only release to mention, though not to recommend much, is *Portrait in Black* (16/11/60—113 mins.): technically polished murder drama with some unfortunate overemphasis.

— RICHARD MALLETT

IN THE GROOVE

The Jackson Pollock of Jazz?

ORNETTE COLEMAN'S new record, portentously entitled *Change of the Century* (London LTZ-K 15199), gave me a severe case of the heebie-jeebies, and all but destroyed my long-held belief that musicians have as much right as painters to be anarchists.

In spite of the vogue that he and his white plastic alto saxophone are now enjoying among some respectable New York intellectuals, including some major progressive jazz musicians (e.g. Charlie Mingus, Miles Davis), it seems improbable that his extreme "melodic independence," as expressed on these seven tracks, may become as influential as the style of the late Charlie Parker, Coleman's own sometime idol.

Coleman says that he and his group (Donald Cherry, trumpet; Charlie Haden, bass; Billy Higgins, drums) are "attempting a break-through to a new, freer conception of jazz, one that departs from all that is 'standard' and cliché in 'modern' jazz." They want to assert their freedom in "free group improvisation," he says, and by this, he explains, he means: "When our group plays, before we start out to play we do not have any idea what the end result will be. Each player is free to contribute what

he feels in the music at any given moment. We do not begin with a preconceived notion as to what kind of effect we will achieve." Their method is, in short, chaotic and, in spite of some evidence of technical virtuosity and a certain tense excitement (the sort of excitement one might experience racing a bubble-car full of bees through a neon-lighted fog), their imaginations do not move them coherently, and their music is, in short, chaos. "Maybe it's something like the paintings of Jackson Pollock," Coleman suggests. That is just the trouble. You can imagine this record if you can imagine Pollock's frenetically erratic multicoloured dribbles of paint made audible. And, before anticipating your reaction, remember that one did not have to look at Pollock's canvases before he had finished, but, music being what it is, one has to suffer the agonizing indecisiveness and formlessness of Ornette Coleman's work every moment it is in progress. *Change of The Century* can be recommended as a curiosity and as a warning against trying to force spontaneity beyond its natural limits.

Being by then in a reactionary mood, I very much enjoyed most of *Singin' The Blues* (RCA Camden CDN-147), an anthology compiled by Leonard Feather. His selections range in time from thirty years ago, when Lizzie Miles made her harshly nasal, energetically rhythmical *Yellow Dog Blues*, to 1950, when Lucy Reed recorded a sweetly melancholy torch song called *You've Got a Date with the Blues*. In between there are many variations on the theme, not all of them really the blues, let alone blue, but all good songs of their kinds, performed with bright gusto. Among the more successful are "Leadbelly's" *Good Morning Blues*, the Armstrong-Teagarden rendition of *Fifty-Fifty Blues*, Billy Eckstine's eyebrow-lifting *Jelly, Jelly*, and Lil Green's *Why*

Don't You Do Right? which is much more realistically weary and disillusioned than the better known Peggy Lee version. There is some Fats Waller and Jimmy Rushing for comic relief.

Esquire have issued a potent blues record, *Outskirts of Town* (32-110), by The Prestige Blues-Swingers, a high-powered American record-company band featuring Art Farmer, trumpet; Jerome Richardson, alto saxophone and flute; Tiny Grimes, guitar, and others, and arranged by Jerry Valentine, who used to arrange for Earl Hines and Billy Eckstine in the heyday of big bands.

A tragic thing recently happened to Joe Bushkin on the way to the studio. Someone persuaded him that he needed "touches of instrumental colour and the rich sound of a choral group" behind his piano in *Listen to The Quiet* (Capitol T-1165). The resulting combination utters some of the soppiest sleepy-time music ever—a shame, because Bushkin used to be a great jazz pianist, and could be still if not absurdly encumbered.

Count Basie and his orchestra seem to have been taking lessons from Arthur Murray. Their new record, *Dance Along With Basie* (Columbia 33SX-1264), is an uncharacteristically restrained set of arrangements suitable for the ballroom.

Other notable recent releases include: *Jazz Festival in Hi-Fi*, by Chico Hamilton, Matty Matlock and others (Warner Brothers WM 4015); *Bean Bags* by Milton Jackson and Coleman Hawkins (London LTZ-K 15196); and, among the numerous EPs, *Impromptu*, by the Dizzy Gillespie-Stan Getz Sextet (HMV 7EG 8596); *The Greatest Piano of All*, by Art Tatum (HMV 7EG 8604); and, if by chance you came away from the film *Jazz on a Summer's Day* wanting to hear more Anita O'Day, it is worth mentioning that HMV have reissued the Gene Krupa record of *Boogie Blues*, one of her most alluring performances. —PATRICK SKENE CATLING

AT THE GALLERY

War and Peace

NO two temperaments could be much further apart than those of Oskar Kokoschka, the restless travelled Viennese, and of Wilson Steer, that most English of men who after a few expeditions to France in his earlier days, spent, I would hazard, the last forty years of his life without leaving these shores. Kokoschka is a man of war and violence. His paintings hit you for six. Exaggeration both of human traits and perspective is the order of the day. Suffering and grim scenes he does not balk at and his oppositions of shrill blues, mauves, greens and reds can be very biting. The large show at the new Marlborough Galleries might be rather overwhelming were it not relieved by an occasional flash of humour in a painting of a face or animal, and by some pastoral water-colours of almost virginal innocence and delicacy.

Human drama, certainly human tragedy, played no part in the art of Wilson Steer. A few children paddling on the beach, a

few charming girls on a pier against a grey or sparkling sea, formed the scenes from which Steer's finest pictures were made. Steer was a very studious painter and a very thorough workman, and if he did not succeed at once brilliantly as he appeared often to do in the scenes mentioned above, then he went on laboriously until his canvas "looked right." Close perusal of some of his heavily worked pieces will reveal lovely passages of paint. At other times with water-colours he could, by the slightest of means, capture a vast range of light effects and convey a wonderful sense of space. The water-colours at the Tate are very rewarding. I am sorry that his large Gainsboroughesque portrait of Mrs. Hammersley is not in this none too big show.

Oskar Kokoschka: Marlborough Gallery, 39 Old Bond Street; closes December 15.

P. Wilson Steer (1860-1942) Centenary Exhibition: Tate Gallery; closes December 11.

—ADRIAN DAINTREY

ON THE AIR

Maigret Becomes Mobile

ALL addicts of Simenon will have their own personal images of Inspector Maigret. There is no criticism implied, therefore, when I say that the sound interpretation which Rupert Davies is giving in the current BBC series *Maigret* does not utterly fit my own. This disclaimer has the support of Simenon himself who, on meeting the actor, went on record with the statement "At last I have found the perfect Maigret." While ever defending the right of the creator to such ultimate judgment, I find that this latest Maigret is not as world-worn, pachydermatous or saturnine as the one who walks in my mind, nor is he as brooding and doom-certain in the tracking of his quarry through the sleazy world of sin. That the television Maigret should be brisker and lighter on his feet than the literary original is an understandable necessity of the medium. In the fifty-five minutes of the weekly programme, there just isn't time for the creeping cat-and-mouse game that the novels play slowly out among the consciences of black and rain-swept streets.

Considering the trumpets that sounded before him, *Maigret* moved off to a mediocre start. *Murder in Montmartre* was first-class in atmosphere but the plot was very loose-limbed and my sympathy was finally forfeited by the production from

a wardrobe of a murderer I had never consciously seen before. *Unscheduled Departure* was much meatier, with a good central conflict fashioned about the train-playing husband and his steely, calculating wife. Peter Copley and Pamela Brown gave the best performances, so far, as these two weirdies and ensured success by making their motivations credible. The standard was maintained in *The Burglar's Wife* when Rupert Davies was able to get down to some sweaty, vintage interrogation of the Mauriac mother and son, and the series now seems set very fair.

The Granada adaptation of *Kipps* is over its sixth episode but, although it has been brightly played and competently mounted, the serial has never really come to life. The people rarely seem to be more than cardboard figures posturing in obedience to the story and few engage either sympathy or dislike to any compelling degree. The episodes run along neatly and efficiently enough but excite no desperate concern for what is going to happen next week. There is a scarcity of rich character parts—only Lloyd Pearson as Mr. Shalford, the draper, and John Stratton as the theatrical Chitterlow spring to the mind as having any Dickensian relish—and this lack leaves things rather colourless and pedestrian. It was perhaps unfortunate that the network decided to confine the serial to only eight half-hour episodes. Such compression has brought the inevitable result that, when the essential action has been provided for, there is little time for ripe characterisation. The rise-and-fall story of *Kipps* is fairly straight stuff once we've jumped over the counter and it needs all the barnstormers it can muster to rivet attention from week to week.

It was good to see Dr. Bronowski back again for the winter term and to hear his hopes of lifting our scientific vision beyond its present horizon of deplored scientific air. He proposes in his new series *Insight* (BBC) to take us on an exploration of the new understandings of the natural world which have arisen during his lifetime. The syllabus daunts me a little, since the birds and I are equally acute on matters of science, and I can only promise to attend the lectures hopefully.

Apart from the reward of wisdom, it is always a pleasure to listen to Dr. Bronowski's simple, muscular English, sparse of adjectives, and making brief lucidity of intricate thought. Hard facts coldly put have formed too long the popular concept of scientific delivery, and the drama of his voice lights up excitement in his subject. His hands are fascinating to watch; they fan outwards as he explains something ready of understanding, scoop inwards our attention as the crucial points are made, and open humbly when he confesses the narrowing field of his own ignorance. Sometimes, however, he seems to prowl over-much, transmitting a restless effect to the student, and his sets, filled with skeletal room-dividers and festival furniture, skirt the danger of being over-gimmicked.

—PATRICK RYAN

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre." Royal Festival Hall.

"Britain in Bamberger's." A Christmas world, with Britain as host, will open in Bamberger's store in New Jersey, U.S.A., on November 25. A reproduction of an English village will set the scene. *Punch* will be on display with a selection of drawings on the theme of Christmas.

BOOKING OFFICE

BY, TO AND FOR THE PEOPLE

By JOHN BOWEN

Six Granada Plays. Faber, 15/-

EVERYONE could be a novelist—I mean, it's only writing it down really, isn't it? And every undergraduate is a poet—at least I know a B.B.C. producer who says so at parties. Nowadays most people seem to write television plays also, and mostly in long-hand. Since neither the B.B.C. nor the commercial companies care much about scripts that don't come in through agents it seems rather a waste of effort—except as psycho-therapy.

Most of these aspiring TV playwrights have heard that there's a shortage. The B.B.C. does two plays a week; the commercial companies four between them. A total of three hundred and twelve TV plays a year seems a great number even if, as the "Age of Kings" goes on and on, so many of them turn out to be by Shakespeare. And of course the companies keep saying they want plays, and a steady flood of unperformable plays (about thirteen thousand a year, counting the corporation and the companies together) keeps arriving.

Many of the plays which are performed aren't much good. Of the six in this volume of Granada plays put out by Faber (who surely didn't make the selection? But it is nowhere stated who did) the first two seem only to have been included so as to encourage writers to think "I could do better than that." A mistake. I don't suggest many people could do worse—though it's worth remembering that one of them, by whatever chance of weather or something awful on the other channel, reached the Top Ten. But to do better entails taking thought about the medium. One might begin by analysing Alexander Baron's *A Bit of Happiness*, the last play in the book, and a classical piece of television construction.

A television play is only a form, only a way for a writer to make a statement. The form is different from that of a novel, a short story, a play for the theatre or a film, but the intention is the same—to make a statement imaginatively, symbolically, not directly; to make a work of art.

The writer cannot comment in a play as he could in a novel; he is only the distorting eye through which people and events are seen. There will be no communion between actors and audience as there is in a theatre; the box diminishes and flattens and keeps its distance. There's no settling into a performance; there are no retakes. It is all done in one go and done once only; whatever mistakes may be made become history. And there's usually too little time for rehearsal.

So far, all loss. Perhaps it is a gain that television drama forces one to select rigorously. One writes in a series of incidents, moving sometimes in a single chain, sometimes in parallel, but always clearly connected. The incidents are things that happen, things that are *seen* to happen, not just said. (The misleading introduction to the Granada book suggests that writers need not think of the camera; the director will do that. Nobody wants the writer to produce a camera script, but unless he *sees* what will happen on the screen he'll end up

with a radio play.) There is no digression in a telly play. What one says, when it all adds up, may sometimes be too simple but should always be strong.

And television offers more than the pleasure of using a new form. Very few people, as a proportion of the population, visit the theatre. The cinema audience is shrinking—and anyway, very few writers may use the cinema to say anything; the director and the cutter are the artists there. Less than half the people of this country ever think to read a book, not a real book, though many call what they read a "book." If writers are to be the imaginative leaven of this democracy they must find a way into the minds of the citizens. For all it is performed only once, the writer of a television play on the commercial channel is talking to ten million people.

He is talking, but are they listening? This is the biggest challenge of the form. To read a book, to visit the theatre or the cinema, is an act of choice and of sacrifice; one has to get the book (if only from the free library), to pay for the seats; one has done something by way of co-operation. But the telly is there in the living-room; one pays nothing but the instalments. So the writer must, from the beginning, use every craftsman's device to get co-operation, to capture attention *from the beginning*. No leisurely establishing scenes for him, no prolegomenon, no exegesis. The classical way to begin a television play is with the two words "I won't."

To arouse interest, attention, sympathy. To make people want to know and, as they learn, to care. This is the problem of all art, which is not complete until it has found a response. There's no way of telling if one gets it. People don't write letters to television playwrights any more than they do to any other artist. Amid all the waste of westerns, and *Riverboat*, and *77 Sunset Strip*, one makes the gesture, and one hopes.

BEHIND THE SCENES



3—PETER BROOK

Has been producing plays since he was seventeen

NEW FICTION

Frame for Julian. Yvonne Mitchell. Hutchinson, 15/-

The Sea Urchin. Violette Jean. Macmillan, 18/-

Pomp and Circumstance. Noël Coward. Heinemann, 18/-

Pistols for Two. Georgette Heyer. Heinemann, 15/-

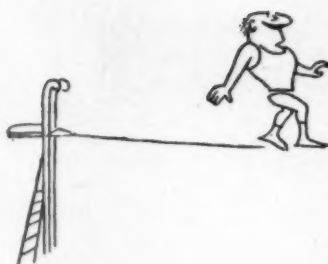
Like her acting, Yvonne Mitchell's writing is quiet and sensitive. She has a strong sense of character and an ability to get inside the minds of children. Her latest novel, *Frame for Julian*, is about an English artist and his family living on the edge of poverty in the south of France. Julian is neurotic

and a failure, a difficult man supported even in his cups by a practical and adoring wife, who is trying to make a normal home for their three young daughters. In the next village lives another English painter, Julian's exact opposite, a happy extravert with troops of unwashed children who are encouraged to romp barefoot over his canvasses. The two friends go off together to Paris to show their pictures, and while the totemed ones start a rage Julian's are ignored, and he comes home on the bottle to commit suicide. It is a sombre little story, told with great understanding; Julian's relationships with his wife and with Gorby, the other artist, and the phony goings-on in the shabby art circles of the Left Bank are handled very surely, but it is in the tensions and humours of an odd family life that Miss Mitchell excels. Her fiercely independent twelve-year-old, who has learned to live a life of her own, is very good indeed.

The narrator in Violette Jean's *The Sea Urchin* dies half-way through the book, but her account of her husband's sordid career goes on unimpaired. During the war she has married a young student in Normandy, and having survived the Liberation he has an improbable offer as a fashion-designer and they go off to Paris, where he quickly imports a mistress into their flat. He is attractive and quite without conscience, despising Paris and longing to be a fisherman in Normandy. After his wife's death, still yearning for the sea but dazzled by the fleshpots of Paris, he becomes a gigolo to an elderly *clairvoyante*. I began to wish desperately he would make up his mind, but eventually he answers the call and is pretty soon drowned, just as he is about to be shot by his discarded second wife. The book is better written than it sounds. Mlle. Jean (whose translator is Mona Andrade) knows her French types, especially the hero's old Norman parents, but she never persuaded me that these things would have happened as they did.

It is fashionable to be superior about Noël Coward, ignoring the comic brilliance of *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives* and *Blithe Spirit*. His first novel is nothing to be ashamed of. *Pomp and Circumstance* is an amusing satire on the society of a British possession, the imaginary island of Samolo, and the convulsions of intrigue into which it is thrown by an impending royal visit. Mr. Coward's invention is still lively, and though his dialogue may be a little stogy he has lost none of his crispness nor his skill in situation. This unpretentious novel is very easily read, and as a tonic after 'flu it should hasten convalescence.

After a gruelling course of modern fiction it is a startling experience to pass into the rosy world of Georgette Heyer, where love-lorn maidens of the highest degree find themselves moving smartly towards Gretna Green in the sporting curricule of a Nonpareil with dazzling Hessians and thirty thousand a year. This is the first collection of Miss Heyer's short stories, and each is guaranteed, after coins have been flicked to expectant ostlers and the viscount with a rueful smile quivering at the corner



of his supercilious mouth has caught up with the lovely governess in the post-chaise, to end with romance neatly tied up in pink ribbon. Except one, "Night at the Inn," which shows how much better Miss Heyer could be if she could forget the exotic blooms of Georgian courtship.

—ERIC KEOWN

SNAP JUDGMENTS

Eye Witness. Ed. John Fisher. Cassell, 25/-

This anthology of British reporting opens with *The Times'* description of Napoleon's departure for St. Helena and ends with another anonymous piece, the *Daily Telegraph* on the Khrushchev Press Conference after the Paris Summit collapsed. The selection is unpredictable but those items that have no outstanding qualities as vivid writing generally describe some event one is interested to read about. The book should appeal both to connoisseurs of journalism and to the general reader of recent history. The editor has kept an eye open for successes in newsgathering as well as sharp descriptions of fleeting events.

Whatever tradition of prose the reporter uses, whether classical and orotund or wan and matey, it is fact rather than diction that makes the impact, the camera eye rather than the poet's readiness of epithet. The man on a daily with a deadline to beat is generally best when he relies on listing detail. It is the leisurely writer who savours and selects who best uses the full resources of the language to produce immediacy.

—R. G. G. PRICE

EXPOUNDING ART

The Metamorphosis of the Gods. André Malraux. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. Secker and Warburg, £7 10s.

The Age of Grandeur. Baroque and Classicism in Europe. Victor-L. Tapié. Translated by A. Ross Williamson. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 63/-

In this volume M. Malraux continues his exploration of the artistic images that man has opposed to time. He is still concerned with that inclusive and ideal museum, that "museum without walls" that includes the "formal dynamism" of African carvings and Mexican fetishes (non-representational works "whose distortions had formerly been put down to ignorance or clumsiness") as much as the glories of Baudelaire's Louvre—Rubens, da Vinci, Rembrandt,

Michelangelo. It is not, Malraux insists, our superior aesthetic "enlightenment" that has caused our change of attitudes. It is simply because "we are now confronted by the art of the whole world." In face of this challenge, "appearance has come to seem no more than the inexhaustible libretto of an interminable opera."

"I love not the gods who are worshipped by night," cried Euripides. In this major study Malraux shows us the Egyptian, Hindu, Buddhist, Greek, Roman and Christian artists imposing their images of godhead and sanctity on a mundane world. Their supramundane conceptions achieve, in the twentieth century, new frames of reference as works of art in that ideal museum in which Rheims and the art of Vermeer and the Buddhas of the Gobi Desert are one.

This is a great book, richly illustrated, worthily translated. At twenty-three Malraux left for Indo-China; the young archaeologist became a revolutionary. All his life he has been a kind of rhetorical explorer. In this book he is still mapping "that uncharted world toward which all great painters are forever groping their way when they express themselves by means of illusionism."

Unprecedented, fantastic, unbelievably complex, surpassingly magnificent—these are phrases familiar and dear to all students and lovers of the Baroque. In his lavishly illustrated and finely produced volume, Professor Tapié attempts a double justification of the Age of Grandeur. He is not only concerned to point out the beauties of Baroque—the staggering altarpieces and splendiferous porticoes, the vast inward-curving façades, the titanic tombs and fountains, the illusions and undulations, the domes placed like stage devices, the ballet designs set in architectural perspective. His book also seeks to provide an historical analysis and explanation of Baroque, a sociology for the age of Bernini and Bossuet, ranging as far afield as Mexico and Poland, and on into the age of Classicism.

While some may decline to accept the writer's total thesis, few will disagree with his main contention that "the historian's task is to disperse prejudice, to endeavour to place correctly the part which one order played in history, and to disentangle the message that it held for its contemporaries." In this his readers will agree that he has succeeded admirably. —PHILIP HENGIST



HARVEST HOME

The Tax Gatherers. James Coffield. Hutchinson, 15/-

The British people are saddled with the heaviest and toughest tax system in the world, and they take it lying down. There are no Poujadists, no protest marchers. The popular press blasts off from time to time about the folly or wickedness of high government expenditure and the need to cut surtax, income tax, purchase tax or death duties, but that is about all. The poor taxpayer takes his punishment like a mouse and relieves his feelings in wry jokes about H.M. Inspectors of Taxes. In America (and the United States, contrary to the general view held in this country, is only slightly less oppressed by the tax-gatherers than Britain) the three main causes of death have been listed as Sex, Taxation and Cancer, and Mr. Coffield suggests that death certificates reading

"Cause of death: Coronary Thrombosis: induced as a result of an Income Tax investigation which lasted for three years"

might well appear in Britain if doctors were encouraged to be more specific.

This is a splendid book for dad. It says what he has always suspected—that the British tax system is an ass, unjust, ambiguous and objectionable. And it says it with wit, brilliant documentation and the kick of a mule. It should of course be given, for maximum effect and benefit, at Christmas for the new year.

— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

SOLDIER BOY

Operation Elvis. Alan Levy. André Deutsch, 10/6

When Elvis ("The Pelvis") Presley, America's most passionately adulated rock 'n' roll star, was conscripted into temporary service as private No. 53310761, U.S. Army, Alan Levy, a reporter on the Louisville, Kentucky, *Courier-Journal*, asked himself an interesting question: "Is one democracy sturdy enough to support a two-year marriage of the Selective Service system to the celebrity system?" The answer is gradually revealed, in colourful, preposterous and entertaining documentary detail, in this bright, crisp little book (114 pages, with drawings by Dedini of the *New Yorker*), and the answer, to the credit and probably to the surprise of most of the

authorities and public relations practitioners involved, is Yes. Not an absolutely triumphant Yes, especially from the point of view of the U.S. Government—Presley's service career cost the Treasury an estimated one million dollars in the income tax that he as a civilian might have paid; but still Yes: the Army survived, and Presley eventually returned to civilian life as a grown-up but with his youthful popularity apparently practically undiminished.

Mr. Levy suffers from no delusions about Presley's quality as an entertainer. "His conspicuous lack of talent has never been masked," Mr. Levy writes. "His looks have been compared to 'a Walt Disney goldfish with sideburns.' His personality is bland." The author attributes Presley's success to improvement of "the American Dream" by demonstrating that it is possible to achieve "a new peak of eminence" without working hard or being thrifty. Even so Mr. Levy seems fair, even generous, to Elvis Presley the soldier, and, though the book offers more facts than judgments, one gets the impression that the only people here condemned, and only for stupidity, are Presley's fans. Of these perhaps the one that deserves some sort of prize for cracked logic is the one who telephoned the chairman of the draft board that conscripted Presley and said "You didn't put Beethoven in the Army, did you?"

— PATRICK SKENE CATLING

BLOOD COUNT

The Pass Beyond Kashmir. Berkely Mather. Collins, 15/- Kim-type journey by competent Bombay detective to help agent of big-money syndicate buy crooked ex-major's secret, which may be oil in Himalayas. Bloodthirsty but loyal Pathans; disguises, sahibs and non-sahibs; mysterious enemies. Spectacular close on unforgiving upland where fiendish Chinese pursue Tibetan refugees. Hero has more than his share of luck, but otherwise excellent, with far more to it than most thrillers and great richness of texture in places.

Blindfold. Lucille Fletcher. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 12/6. One of E. & S.'s reliable "Thriller of the Month" series. Psychologist, expert on "genius," is hired by U.S. Government to cure atomic-fuel scientist in conditions of such secrecy that he may not even see his patient or know much of his history. Things go dangerously awry, but in the end egg-head defeats crooks, gets girl. Dry, intelligent, enjoyable.

Tiger on my Back. The Gordons. Macdonald, 12/6. Honest but adventure-loving American girl becomes involved in international spy-cartel's hunt for defaulting arms-smuggler. Background Morocco and Algiers. Heroine likeable, bad-man hero fine, villain splendid, politics real and important.

The Search for Tabatha Carr. Richard Martin Stern. Secker and Warburg, 15/- Millionaire leaves his missing daughter half his fortune on condition she claims it in two months. Young lawyer finds she is secretary to top U.S. communist, now in exile, and pursues couple across Europe, catches up only to find all three of them doomed and hunted across snow-covered Dolomites. Purposeful writing, well-controlled pace, finish a bit too ambitious.

Holiday with Murder. Glyn Carr. Bles, 13/- Poisoning, priest-murder, etc., against jolly Majorcan background. Sir Abercrombie Lewker, actor-manager-sleuth, solves all amid a welter of quotations but less climbing than usual. Restful but satisfying reading.

Mr. Diabolo. Anthony Lejeune. Macdonald, 12/6. A classical-pattern locked-room murder at Oxfordish college, with two disappearances into thin air thrown in and a spice of Satanism, all related and solved with leisurely confidence.

— PETER DICKINSON

NACHT A YACHT

SHEIKHS, last guardians of gracious giving, tend to run to transport—the gaily-packaged Comet or Cadillac illustrates their kindly feelings. Even so, this scarcely enables the happy recipients to get away from themselves... a service that can be performed more cheaply, transporting your friends fifty-three times a year at a bargain figure of £2 16s. Send us the name, the address and the money. We will send PUNCH, with your Christmas greetings timed to the Day. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s (\$7.25); Elsewhere overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00). Write to Department ED, PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4. U.S.A. and Canadian readers may remit by cheques on their own banks. Other overseas readers should consult their bankers or remit by postal money order.

MY NAME..... MR. MRS. MISS
(BLOCK LETTERS)
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Please send PUNCH throughout 1961 to the name(s) and address(es) as detailed on attached sheet of paper, preceded by a Greetings Card on my behalf to arrive at Christmas. (The service can be started earlier if desired.)

FOR WOMEN



In My Garden

"TIDY up herbaceous borders," says my gardening book for November. "Dig all available ground." "Prune deciduous hedges." "Gather rose heps."

I know what it means of course. It wants me to get soaked to the skin plunging about in that thicket of weeds and Michaelmas daisies by the gate, being torn to pieces behind my back by those cowardly rambles on the trellis and set upon in a body by all those O.S. stinging nettles along the wall. Someone ought to help stinging nettles. They seem to be a bad case of unsublimated death instinct—even the babies bite.

It (this book) wants me to take half the garden into the house on my shoes, for me to sweep out again later, and to leave the other half looking like one of those gateways the cows go through. Alternatively I am to get soaked to the skin worrying great branches off the hedge, being seized and scratched from below by all those brambles. And of course it doesn't know about the nasturtiums.

In the spring, recalling a certain barrenness in places from the drought of 1959 (of blessed memory), I planted a lot of nasturtiums. They are very hardy, I thought, they can't help coming up, they make a colourful border, they climb prettily over walls and they fill up when one has a rather too large garden and too little time to do it in. What's more, as I learned in France, nasturtiums are a food. Not only the capers as sauce but the flowers as salad. They are quite a delicacy over there. A wonderful crop to have! That's what I thought. This year, just because we were away

and it rained all the time, the nasturtiums have taken advantage. They've grown into great green ruthless rapacious monsters spreading like the plague over all available and non-available ground. It isn't even as though they had any flowers to speak of—just great coarse leaves the size of telly trays and stems like well-developed grass snakes. They'll come back and back now, I'm told, year after year like the weeds. I'll never get rid of them—ever. "Tidy up the herbaceous borders," says that book. All very well for it!

Then there are the vegetables. We never buy a veg, you know, we tell people. Everything we need in the garden absolutely fresh. That's what we

say. Yes. My leeks are so fresh they still have most of their bed with them in the saucepan. Instead of whipping open a tin of an evening or unfreezing something nice and clean and ready from the deep-freeze, I have to prowl round the garden in the dark after sprouts or roots or cabbages and come in caked in mud, looking and smelling like some downtrodden peasant in a particularly underdeveloped country where they don't even have women's magazines.

"Take up winter turnips," says the book complacently. "Store winter carrots." "Lift a few parsnips as it will be well-nigh impossible to do so when the ground is frozen hard" (it's telling me!). "Force rhubarb." "Sow broad beans for next year." Help—starting all over again already—it's as bad as Christmas!

And December is almost on us. Then the book wants me to rid the soil by sterilization of any insect pests that may have been rampant. We'll see.

—FRANCES KOENIG

Anniversary

I KNOW one should weed out dead wood ruthlessly from one's wardrobe, but some clothes one clings to because of the memories they hold or the things they do to you. Like my Jaeger pink dress with the tulip skirt that I wore when we were courting. It conjures up candlelight, fireglow, and that special way he looked at me whenever I wore it. It went to theatres, dances, parties, and each time it slipped over my shoulders I felt like a queen.

Three years ago. I've hardly worn it since, but I couldn't bear to give it away. I put it on the other night when we were going out to celebrate our anniversary. The same delight took hold of

me. It did the same magical things for my face and figure.

My husband was looking at his watch when I swayed towards him moving on an invisible pink cloud. He looked me quickly up and down and said nothing. "Something wrong?" I said.

"It might be the shoes," he said.

I slipped back and put on my cream shoes with the tiny heels and waltzed dreamily up to him.

"It must be the necklace," he said.

I took the necklace off. On second thoughts I took the earrings off too. He's right, I thought. I look much younger. I floated back.

"Perhaps it's your hair," he said.



The rosy cloud a little ragged round the edges, I sat down and took all the pins, pads and rollers out of my hair and brushed it flat. As it was three years ago, I thought forgivingly. How men remember.

Dead silence.

"It's the dress," he said.

I couldn't believe him. I was shattered.

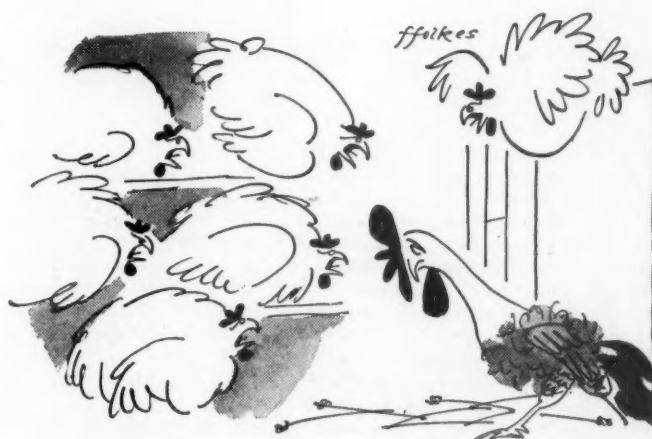
"But darling, don't you remember? It's the dress. My pink dress. I wore it when we were engaged. When you took me to Tony's? I've always worn it whenever I've wanted to look special."

"I know," he said. "I never liked it."

"How could I tell you?" he said later. "I kept hoping it would wear out."

If anyone is interested in a pink Jaeger dress with a tulip skirt, size 14 . . . ?

— JUNE R. HUME



Is there a Doctor of Music in the House?

THIS is terrible! I have had the Pakistani National Anthem on the brain for a fortnight now. Not that it is a bad tune mind you. I rather like it, with its hint of the March of the Gladiators. But the thing is worrying me; you can be arrested here for not standing up for it (quite rightly) and I have been singing it lying down—all night obviously, if it is my last thought at bed-time and the first thought at 5 a.m.

I have tried my usual cure, which is to sing "Dinah" like mad until the other tune goes away, when Dinah, dear girl that she is, goes gracefully away too, without even a flash of those Dixie eyes. But Dinah has not obliged this time. It may be my own fault. As every Boy Scout knows, the dixie on which he cooks that stew is really the Indian *degchi*, and for some time now I have

been saying, "Dinah! With your *degchi* eyes blazing—" Perhaps Dinah is in a huff, not unnaturally. I had a slight reprieve with "Greensleeves" but it was too quiet. Then for some reason the word "pompous" came to me and there I was with "Land of Hope and Glory." Worse and worse. I whistled back "Pak se zamin" as quickly as possible. I can't stand Elgar.

I must keep calm. This is not the worst known case after all. I once had "Once in Royal David's City" for about two years and managed to remain thankful that it was not one of the icier carols like "See amid the winter's snow," which would have been too cruel with a shade temperature of 118°. A girl who worked with me for about ten years had Schubert's Unfinished the whole of that time—just those memorable six or eight

bars. She did not keep it to herself either. Another young lady in a Y.W.C.A. could not get rid of "Under the bridges of Paris." I wanted to tell her it was really "*Après la guerre finie*," but she might have asked "Which *guerre*?"

The sun is sinking. I shall eat my supper and read and listen to the B.B.C. if it doesn't go *zooz-zooz-zooz* as it has been lately, and may even hear a good tune—what about Beethoven's Seventh, or those other old girls, "Sweet Sue" and "Margie," of whom I am very fond? I shall rub on my mosquito oil and sink gratefully on to the pillow. As my eyes close there will be a roll of drums, a clash of brass, and I shall be fixed as in a vice in that patriotic song until it is time to let in the sweeper at five.

— MARJORY E. FYSON

Toby Competitions

No. 141—History Up to Date

HISTORY, according to the authors of *1066 And All That*, ended in 1918. Since then many Good and Bad Things have occurred. Supply 120 words or less from a sequel, *1920 And All This*.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by Wednesday, November 30. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 141, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 138 (Opening Lines)

This competition—a poem to a dentist written by a patient—gave a record number of readers the opportunity to express their thoughts on a subject which cannot be evaded however long it may be delayed. The number of entrants whose verse suggested that they could hardly wait to plunge their teeth into the dentist's fingers is frightening for that profession. The winner is:

E. H. SMITH
107 PHILBEACH GARDENS
EARLS COURT, S.W.5



One thing has, does, will *always* puzzle me—
What unknown force drives men to
dentistry?

I can't imagine you, dear Dr. Wilde,
Desiring your profession as a child;
If so what strange experience in your youth
First focussed your attention on the tooth?
When was it that the fateful penny dropped
And you decided "caries must be
stopped"?

But now I find I have an odd misgiving;
Perchance you hate the way you make a
living.
Could you—indeed could any of your
kind—

Enjoy the sight of molars undermined?
If Dr. Gallup had you dentists polled
Would he discover that you drill for gold?

Following are the runners-up:

Dumb, gagged, I writhe here while you
talk of TV, of your flat,
Of how you hotted up the Jag, or bought
your wife a hat.
You chat about your daughter's school,
the uniform, the fees;
You say the greens are looking well, that
they've advanced the tees.
You tell me you're a hi-fi fan; that you play
squash to slim;
That Kennedy will top the poll, that
Nixon's slightly dim.

You swear the H-bomb is a "must"—ah,
here's where we agree:
A teeny-weeny one would help right now.
SHUT UP, Macfee!
Olive Norton, 1 Holly Lane, Four Oaks,
Warwickshire

Mein Herr Dentsicht, a schtrong complains
I habe,
Und so these Würtz I write upon schtiff
carde:
Der other Tag, I reach your door; mit
Schtick
I rap und rap; you come; "right 'ouse?"
say ich;
You nod; in chair my buttocks I down-sit,
Dann, later, in der bowl, my teeth out-
schpit.
Also: der Mann, who das "right 'ouse"
(mit 'h')
Confundles mit "right aus" (mitout das
'h')
Abdominable ist; I hate his gütz;
Und sorry bin die Englisch are such
müttz.

So, meeschter dentsicht, dies zu you I'm
schpeaking,
Again zu you my path I am not scheckung
Nor to a leedle talk am not demanding
Namens: "die Anglo-German Unter-
schstanding."

J. S. Abbott, Whitgift School, Haling
Park, South Croydon

Get hence! You vile unnecessary man,
With loathsome tools all sharpened for
the kill;
You source of danger to the human clan;
You torturer who dares to send a BILL!
Your antiseptic chair with backward tilt
Is fouler far than any bed of nails,
And as you stoop to plug my teeth with gilt
I hear a thousand children's plaintive
wails.

I thumb the tattered heaps which never
change,
And gaze at piles of long redundant gloss;
But wait! . . . Oh no! this tortuous pain
is strange,
I've five more hours in which to turn and
toss—

White-coated vision! hasten on the night,
And with your genial hands relieve my
plight!

Jennifer Richmond-Brown, West Ardhru,
Dervaig, Isle of Mull, Scotland

You devil with the high-speed drill,
I must admire your iron will,
Which makes you utter "Open wide"
And thrust that chromium arm inside.
You chatter while my mouth is full
Of foaming tube and cotton-wool,
While if I double up with pain
You merely murmur "Rinse again."
"Goodbye," you smile and stiffly bow,
"That tooth should give no trouble now."
Call me neurotic—what you will,
I swear that tooth is aching still.

Mrs Vanda Morton, 204 Hawthorn
Drive, Chantry, Ipswich

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